



Keeping Southern Nevada's Children Safe from Lead Exposure

September 4, 2025

Attention Parents and Caregivers:

The Southern Nevada Health District is reminding parents and caregivers of the importance of testing children younger than 6 years of age for lead poisoning. Lead exposure can cause serious, lifelong health problems, and early detection through a simple blood test is the only way to know if a child has been exposed. Testing is simple and can be done by your child's doctor or at a lab with a referral. Children should be tested at ages 12 and 24 months. If your child is under 6 and has not had a lead test, ask your health care provider for one. Testing is free for Medicaid and Nevada Check Up beneficiaries and is covered by most private and employer-based insurance.

In 2024, 52 children in Clark County younger than 6 years of age had a blood lead level at or above the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) threshold of 3.5 micrograms per deciliter (mcg/dL). Despite this, only an estimated 3.4% of children in Clark County are tested, based on information reported to the Health District. That means many cases go undetected.

Lead is a naturally occurring heavy metal that is mined and used in many manufactured products. It has been detected in common consumer items including cookware, ceramics, keys, imported goods, herbal remedies, spices, fishing equipment and food. Over time, some of these items can degrade and release fine dust, contaminating homes and play areas without visible warning.

Childhood lead poisoning usually occurs when children ingest lead-contaminated dirt, dust, or food, or chew on lead-contaminated items. Once in the body, lead enters the bloodstream and may cross into the brain and other parts of the body, where it can cause lasting harm. Lead poisoning is not contagious and can happen quickly, or slowly through small exposures over time.

Young children are most at risk of harm from elevated blood lead levels because their brains and nervous systems are still developing. Even low levels of lead can cause behavior problems and learning delays. Higher levels can cause headaches, hearing loss, brain damage, permanent loss of intelligence, anemia, and even death. Because symptoms are often silent, testing a child's blood is the only way to tell if a child has lead poisoning. Early testing is critical to avoid lifelong health effects.

Science is clear. Lead has no safe level.

For more information on childhood lead poisoning, visit:

- [Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention – Southern Nevada Health District](https://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/community-health-center/clppp/)
 - <https://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/community-health-center/clppp/>
- [Home - Nevada Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program \(nvclppp.org\)](http://www.nvclppp.org)
 - www.nvclppp.org

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Cassius Lockett'.

Cassius Lockett, PhD
District Health Officer
Southern Nevada Health District