



Testing for Blood Lead Poisoning

Why should children be tested for lead poisoning?

Lead poisoning affects many children younger than 6 years of age in Maryland. Lead can harm a child's brain, causing lifelong learning and behavior problems. Lead poisoning has decreased over the years, but there is no safe level of lead. The only way to know if a child has been exposed is a blood test.

When is Testing for Lead Poisoning Required?

In March 2016, Maryland implemented the Lead-Free Maryland Kids campaign and the updated clinical requirements for blood lead testing of children. The entire state of Maryland is now considered 'at risk' for lead exposure, for children born on or after 1/1/15. As a result, all children born on or after 1/1/15 must be tested for lead at ages 12 and 24 months. Healthcare providers and most local health departments can test for lead. Many private insurance policies cover the cost of testing. The cost of blood lead testing for children enrolled in Medicaid is covered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.