

The Global Lead Advice and Support Service (GLASS) provides information and referrals on lead poisoning and lead contamination prevention and management, with the goal of eliminating lead poisoning globally and protecting the environment from lead.



GLASS is run by The LEAD Group Incorporated ABN 25 819 463 114

global lead advice
& support service

FACTSHEET

How to Protect Your Family from Lead in Indonesia

For Indonesian People Exposed To Lead At Home

In order to protect their family from lead exposure, people who work with lead must ensure that they not take lead dust home on their clothes. This can be done in several ways, including using separate clothes and shoes while at work, showering and removing work clothes before returning home, putting work clothes in a plastic bag, washing them separately from other clothes, cleaning the washing machines afterwards to remove the lead from the machine.

For people who have hobbies that involve working with lead: keep the work away from children and pregnant women (DHS 2010).

Protecting children from exposure to lead

There are several steps parents can take to protect children from lead exposure.

1. Find information from the local health department about lead in drinking water. If the lead concentration in drinking water is higher than 0.010 milligrams per litre (0.010mg/L), find a water source that safe to consume.
2. Use cold tap water for cooking or infant formula and let the tap water run approximately one minute before consuming. [This is because the heating system for water will probably contain leaded brass or bronze fittings. Ed.]
3. Wash children's hands often to rinse off any lead dust or dirt, especially before meals.
4. Use dishes that are free from lead. Some dishes may contain lead, especially chipped or cracked dishes.
5. Wipe the floor or any surfaces with wet material twice a week to eliminate dust (which may contain lead).
6. Avoid food from cans that contain lead, use glass or lead-free plastic storage to store food from cans. Cans that contain lead have a raised seam.
7. Wash children's toys frequently, and throw away toys that have flaking paint.
8. Avoid planting vegetables in soil that possibly contains lead - such as in wasteland.
9. If removing peeling paint, or carrying out painting, always wear safety clothes and gloves. Keep children away from peeling paint and the renovation site, and mop any dust from the peeling paint with wet material.
10. Protect very young children who are not yet crawling by putting down a clean, washable sheet on the floor as a play area.
11. Contact local health department to find any professional workers who can help to remove lead based paint.

(Source: Yayasan Tambuhuk Sinta 2010 and DHOCNY 2007).

Good food and nutrition is another way to protect against lead being absorbed by the body. Food containing iron and calcium is protective. Iron can be found in most meat, green vegetable, eggs, tuna and whole grain. Calcium can be found in dairy products such as milk and yogurt. It is also found in ice cream, cheese and milkshakes. Children should also eat sufficient food, because children with an empty stomach may absorb more lead into the body (DHOCNY 2007).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, lead poisoning is an environmental problem that can be found in many part of the world. Since lead used in many consumer products, it is important that there be public awareness of the harmful effects of lead. As a developing country, Indonesia may be at risk of high lead exposure due to limited information and awareness of lead poisoning.

This report has identified several studies about lead poisoning in several areas in Indonesia. Due to limited information and research time, this report has only identified lead poisoning in urban areas. Therefore it is suggested that a study on lead poisoning in rural areas is needed. Collaboration with Balifokus is also recommended because the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) plastic shoe study (SSNC 2009) notes: "In collaboration with the SSNC, Balifokus has launched the Indonesia Toxics Free Network to support and teach other environmental organisations in their work on chemicals issues."

In order to increase community awareness of lead poisoning in Indonesia, there are several recommendations suggested in this report. These recommendations include:

1. Improve the education or training about lead poisoning, especially for people who live in rural areas where there is a lack of information and awareness about lead poisoning and other environmental diseases. By providing information about the sources of lead and its effects on health, people may be able to take steps to avoid contact with lead that may harmful and also be able to prevent lead contaminating the environment.
2. Improve waste management for the whole country. Waste may be a source for many hazardous materials, and is one of the environmental problem in Indonesia. The government should not focus just on waste management in urban areas only. Better waste management would help society eliminate burning waste and hazardous material. In addition, it would improve environmental health and eliminate other environmental diseases in the society.
3. Improve environmental policy. The current environmental policy needs to be improved by addressing the potential source of environmental hazards. For example, as mentioned previously, agricultural land should be separate from urban areas and traffic densities in order to eliminate lead contamination of vegetables or paddy rice. In order to manage farming areas, the government needs to urge businesses to not build close to farming areas.
4. Demand that the government regulate lead content of consumer products. This is important, especially since Indonesia has entered into free trade agreements.

References - see [Lead Poisoning in Indonesia](#)