



# Stay Healthy During Pregnancy for Your Baby's Sake... and Yours!

Spring, 2008

Lead can get into your body many ways. You can breathe in dirt or dust that contains lead. Cookware and some glazed pottery may release lead into food. Some folk remedies and cosmetics contain high levels of lead. Even lead you were exposed to as a child may still be stored in your bones and be released into your blood stream during pregnancy. The lead in your blood stream can pass into your baby's body and cause the baby to have health problems.

## Follow these easy steps to lower lead exposure, and protect your unborn baby:

- ✔ **Keep lead out of your food**
  - Wash your hands and countertops before you prepare food.
  - Wash your hands before you eat or serve food.
  - Wash vegetables before cooking them or eating them raw.
- ✔ **Cook, serve, and store food in lead-free containers.**
  - Use only glazed pottery that is labeled "lead-free: for cooking, serving, or storing food."
  - Mexican bean pots, and other pottery and ceramics may contain lead and should not be used for cooking, serving, or storing food.
- ✔ **Eat foods high in iron, calcium, and zinc.**
  - Eat foods high in iron (eggs, raisins, greens, beans, peas), calcium (milk, cheese, yogurt) and zinc (led red meat). These foods may help your body absorb less lead.
- ✔ **Clean your home weekly to keep it as dust free as possible.**
  - Clean floors, window sills, doorframes and baseboards with soap and water.
  - Place washable doormats or rugs at all entries to the home. Wash doormats and rugs separately from other laundry.
  - Wipe feet before entering the house. Leave shoes at the door so that dirt and dust that may contain lead will not be tracked into the house.
- ✗ **Do not use home remedies or cosmetics produced outside the United States.**
  - Know that azarcon, greta, and some cosmetics contain high levels of lead.



## Do you plan to have a baby?

If you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant, talk to your health care provider about getting your blood tested for lead, especially if you have been using dishes, cookware, or other products that you think could contain lead.

This fact sheet is provided by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. If you have questions about lead exposure call Sue Casteel, in the Kansas City ATSDR office at (913) 551-1312.

**ATSDR**  
AGENCY FOR TOXIC SUBSTANCES  
AND DISEASE REGISTRY



## Get your child tested for lead poisoning today!

Most lead poisoned children do not act or look sick.

The only way to know if your child has lead poisoning is to have a blood lead test.

Children 6 years and younger are more likely to have lead poisoning.

Call your doctor or clinic today to get your child tested.