



# Central Michigan District Health Department

Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities



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## PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

**To: Local Media Outlets**  
**From: Central Michigan District Health Department**  
**RE: CMDHD Promoting Lead Poisoning Prevention Week**  
**Release Date: October 10, 2024**

### CMDHD is Promoting Lead Poisoning Prevention Week: October 20 - 26

Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) is promoting Lead Poisoning Prevention Week to raise awareness about lead poisoning and encourage preventive actions. CMDHD recommends that all children under the age of 6 be screened for elevated blood lead levels. You can obtain blood lead screenings through your primary care provider or CMDHD.

Lead screening is covered by most insurances and is free for children with Medicaid coverage. If elevated levels are detected, a nurse case manager will work with the family to reduce blood lead levels and help determine the source of lead poisoning, so it can be eliminated. Visit [our webpage](#) to learn more about CMDHD's lead screening services or call us at 989-314-7570 to make a child lead screening appointment.

"Lead is harmful to your health, especially for children under the age of six and pregnant people," said Emily Nelson, CMDHD Family Health Director. "There is no safe level of lead in the blood, and intervention is needed for children with higher levels of lead."

Here are important facts about lead exposure and its potentially harmful effects:

- **Lead is toxic, especially in young children.** When lead is inhaled or swallowed, it can result in damage to the brain and nervous system. That damage can cause learning problems, behavioral problems, slow growth, slow development, hearing problems, and/or speech problems.
- **Children younger than 6 years of age are particularly vulnerable to lead exposure.** Their bodies are growing rapidly. Young children also tend to put their hands or other objects into their mouths. These items may be contaminated with lead dust.
- **Lead poisoning is preventable!** The key is keeping children from coming into contact with lead.
- **Lead can be found inside and outside of the home.** A common source of exposure is from deteriorated lead-based paint, which was used inside and outside many homes and other buildings

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built before 1978. Children can be exposed by swallowing or inhaling lead dust from old cracked or chipped paint, eating paint chips, or chewing on surfaces coated with lead dust and/or lead-based paint, such as windowsills.

- Lead exposure can happen during renovation, repair, and painting jobs in homes built before 1978.
- Lead may also be found in drinking water. The most common sources of lead in drinking water are lead pipes, faucets, and fixtures. Find out if your home's pipes are lead with the [Protect Your Tap Guide](#).
- Lead naturally occurs in soil. In many places across the United States, the amount of lead in soil is significantly higher than naturally occurring levels, due to industrial and human activities. Lead-contaminated soil can become a source of lead exposure if accidentally ingested during outdoor play or gardening or brought into the house on shoes or other garments.
- **Other potential sources of lead** include items made in other countries, such as toys, painted furniture, jewelry, health remedies, foods, cosmetics, powders, pottery, porcelain, and collectibles that are passed from one generation to another.
- **Some children are at greater risk for lead exposure than others**, including those who are:
  - living with adults whose jobs or hobbies involve working with lead.
  - members of certain cultural groups.
  - recent immigrants, refugees, or international adoptees.
  - living in poorly maintained homes or apartments built before 1978.
- **Children and pregnant people may crave nonfood items that may contain lead**, such as soil, clay, or crushed pottery. This condition is called pica.

Learn more about lead poisoning from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and [World Health Organization](#).

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon. Visit our website at [www.cmdhd.org](http://www.cmdhd.org) and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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*To request an interview, please visit our website ([cmdhd.org](http://cmdhd.org)) and fill out the [Media Interview Request Form](#).*



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