

LEAD IN PAINT

AN INVISIBLE POISON!

Lead poisoning is the cause of many illnesses. Lead has been added to paint for many years in South Africa. Paint containing lead is an important cause of lead poisoning in children.

This picture shows the many ways we are exposed to lead in paint in our daily lives. Use the information on this poster to protect yourself and your family from lead poisoning.



Artists and crafts people have a responsibility to use lead-free paint, to protect themselves and the community.

Never break open batteries to make mud paint for traditional homes. Batteries contain lead.

BE LEAD FREE

Adults who work in a place where lead is used should try to shower and change their clothing before leaving the work place.

Ensure that playground equipment is well maintained. Old flaking paint may contain lead.

Encourage children to wash their hands often in soapy water, especially after playing in dirty or dusty areas.

Use a wet mop or cloth soaked in soapy water to clean dirty or dusty areas.

Store paint well out of children's reach.

When painting or removing old paint from your home, keep children well away from the work area.

Do not allow children to play with old cans of paint.

Never burn painted wood. It can be highly toxic.

Only buy "Lead-free" paint. Check the labels on the tin if you are not sure, or ask your paint supplier.

Toys and coloured pencils bought from toy shops, supermarkets, flea markets and craft shops can also contain lead. Ask the shop keeper if the items you are buying are lead-free.

Pregnant women should be especially careful when using paint.

Many wooden and home-made toys are painted with paint containing lead. Always check with the toy maker or supplier that lead-free paint has been used.

Children's furniture should only be painted with lead-free paint.

Do not let children put toys, sticks, stones or other objects into their mouths. Also discourage children from chewing their nails or sucking their fingers.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF LEAD POISONING:

- Learning difficulties at school
 - Hyperactivity, inability to concentrate.
 - Hearing problems
 - Anemia (weak and pale)
 - Damage to organs
- The signs of lead poisoning are not always visible.

IF YOU THINK YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR FAMILY MAY HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO LEAD ASK A DOCTOR OR NURSE FOR A "BLOOD LEAD" TEST.