



# Vast majority of Ohio adults know about the dangers of lead exposure

The **Ohio Health Issues Poll** is conducted every year to learn more about the health opinions, behaviors and status of Ohio adults. In 2019, OHIP asked Ohio adults several questions about their knowledge of lead exposure and the dangers related to exposure. Lead exposure and poisoning in children can be prevented. Knowledge about the dangers and common sources of lead exposure is important to ensure that lead poisoning is prevented.

## Percentage of Ohio adults who correctly answered questions about lead exposure

Lead paint chips can be poisonous when eaten. (*True*)

97%

Lead paint is more likely to be found in newer homes than in older homes. (*False*)

90%

High lead in the body can affect a child's ability to learn. (*True*)

89%

Children are more at risk for lead poisoning than adults. (*True*)

80%

SOURCE: 2019 Ohio Health Issues Poll (released April 2020)

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## WHAT OHIP FOUND

### At least 8 in 10 Ohio adults correctly answer questions about lead

OHIP asked whether respondents believed the following series of statements were true or false (correct answers noted):

- Lead paint chips can be poisonous when eaten. (*True*)
- Lead paint is more likely to be found in newer homes than in older homes. (*False*)
- High lead in the body can affect a child's ability to learn. (*True*)
- Children are more at risk for lead poisoning than adults. (*True*)

In general, Ohio adults were well aware of the dangers of lead exposure. Nearly all Ohio adults (97%) were aware that lead paint chips can be poisonous when eaten. Nine in 10 accurately reported that lead is not more likely to be found in newer homes than older homes (90%) and that high lead in the body can affect a child's ability to learn (89%). Eight in 10 (80%) knew that children are more at risk for lead poisoning than adults.

Awareness of the dangers of lead exposure did not vary by education, income or the presence of children in the home.

## WHY DO WE ASK THESE QUESTIONS?

Lead is a serious environmental contaminant that can negatively affect nearly every system in the body.<sup>1</sup> According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is no safe level of lead exposure for children.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ohio Department of Health. (n.d.) Childhood lead poisoning. Retrieved from <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/Childhood-Lead-Poisoning>

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). Health effects of lead exposure. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/prevention/health-effects.htm>

Research has shown that lead exposure in children can lead to brain and nervous system damage, delayed growth and development, learning disabilities and behavioral problems and issues with hearing and speech (see footnote 2). The most common sources of lead in the environment include older homes with lead paint, older water pipes, certain toys and jewelry, and some goods imported from other countries.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). Sources of lead. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/prevention/sources.htm>

## WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

The Ohio Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program leads the lead poisoning prevention effort in Ohio and is specifically focused on preventing exposure before age 6. This program collects all data on Ohio residents to contribute to a national database tracking blood lead levels, promotes the CDC's guidelines for preventing lead poisoning, and educates homeowners and families about how to effectively handle sources of lead in their environment. For more information about the Ohio Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, please visit <https://bit.ly/39Jlda8>.