

Lead Level Screening

Lead can do great harm, especially to young children. Childhood lead poisoning at low levels can make learning difficult, interfere with growth, harm hearing, and delay development. At high levels, lead can cause coma, convulsions, and even death.

The main source of lead poisoning is lead dust from lead-based paint, which was used in many homes until 1978. Young children are exposed to lead dust in older homes through normal activities such as crawling on the floor and putting their hands, toys, or other objects in their mouths.

Lead can also be found in bare soil, some imported spices, home remedies, and cosmetics.

Lead level screening

Lead poisoning can occur without symptoms. This is very common in children ages 6 months to 6 years. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Florida Department of Health have stringent requirements for lead toxicity screening for all Medicaid-eligible children.

- **All** Medicaid-eligible children are considered at risk for lead toxicity and **must** receive blood lead level screening tests for lead poisoning.
- Primary care providers (PCPs) are **required (regardless of responses to the lead screening questions)** to ensure that children are screened for lead toxicity **from 9 months to 18 months old and again from 2 years to 6 years old.**
- Risk questions should be asked at every visit thereafter.

Refer to the Bright Futures/American Academy of Pediatrics Recommendations for Preventive Pediatric Health Care periodicity schedule at https://downloads.aap.org/AAP/PDF/periodicity_schedule.pdf.

The plan recommends that lead screens be done at 9 months old and again before the second birthday, and that risk questions be asked at every visit thereafter.





As an added incentive to help PCPs comply with these standards, the Plan will reimburse PCPs for blood lead screening services if they are performed in the PCP's office.

Submit claim(s) with the following CPT code for these services:

Billable service	CPT code
Lead screening	83655

Note: This service is covered only when the aforementioned CMS/Florida Department of Health guidelines are followed. Elevated initial blood lead results obtained on capillary screening specimens are presumptive and should be confirmed using a venous specimen.

Providers who participate in our plan have a responsibility to communicate with agencies including, but not limited to, local public health agencies regarding cases involving children with lead poisoning.

The Florida Department of Health provides a toll-free Lead Information Line (**1-850-245-4401**) for questions and also provides electronic materials on lead poisoning and other environmental hazards. You can visit their website at

<https://www.floridahealth.gov/environmental-health/lead-poisoning/index.html>.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also have resources at **www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead**.