

Healthy Foods That Fight the Effects of Lead



Lead is a poisonous metal that our bodies cannot use. When lead enters the body it stops good minerals such as iron and calcium from working right. Lead poisoning can cause learning and behavioral problems and harm your child's brain, kidneys, and other organs. Foods high in iron, vitamin C, zinc, and foods that are low-fat can help protect your child from lead poisoning.

Below are some foods that can help prevent lead poisoning in your child.

Iron-Rich Foods

Normal levels of iron work to protect the body from the harmful effects of lead.

Good sources of iron include:

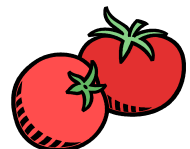
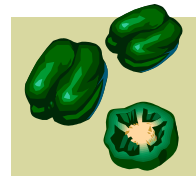
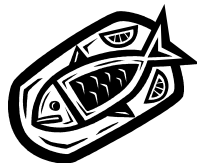
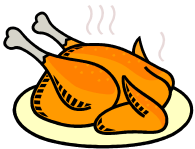
- *Lean red meats, chicken, turkey, eggs, fish, seafood (clams, mussels)*
- *Canned sardines and tuna*
- *Dried beans, split peas, and lentils*
- *Iron-fortified cereal*
- *Enriched and whole grain breads*
- *Prune juice*
- *Dried fruits (raisins, prunes, figs, apricots)*
- *Peanut butter*
- *Leafy green vegetables, broccoli*

Vitamin C-Rich Foods

Vitamin C and iron-rich foods work together to reduce lead absorption. Good

sources of Vitamin C include:

- *Oranges, orange juice*
- *Grapefruits, grapefruit juice*
- *Strawberries, cantaloupes, watermelon*
- *Tomatoes, tomato juice*
- *Green and red peppers, broccoli, potatoes*
- *Raw cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts*



Calcium-Rich Foods

Calcium reduces lead absorption and also helps make teeth and bones strong. Good sources of calcium include:

- *Dairy products such as milk, cheese, and yogurt*
- *Cottage cheese*
- *Leafy green vegetables, such as spinach, collard greens, kale and broccoli*
- *Canned sardines or salmon*
- *Tofu*

Low-fat Foods

Note: Children over 2 years can drink low-fat milks and eat yogurt, cheese, and other dairy products

- *Serve lean meats and skinless chicken; bake or grill instead of frying.*
- *Limit high-fat fast foods, like hamburgers, fried chicken, hot dogs, French fries, fried fish, and ice cream.*
- *Limit high-fat snack foods like doughnuts, potato chips, corn chips, cookies, pies, cakes, and chocolate.*
- *Use little or no oil, butter, lard, or margarine in cooking and on foods.*

Helpful Tips and Hints

Follow these helpful tips and hints to help prevent lead poisoning in your child:

- *Wash all fruits and vegetables before cooking or eating.*
- *Wash all counter tops before cooking.*
- *Wash your child's hands often.*
- *Provide your child with four to six small meals during the day. Children with empty stomachs absorb more lead than children with full stomachs.*
- *Never store foods in opened metal cans.*
- *Don't prepare, serve, or store food or drinks in ceramic pottery dishes or crystal glasses unless you are sure they are lead free.*

