



County of San Diego

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Dear Medical Provider:

LEAD TESTING AND SCREENING IN CHILDREN

The Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP) of the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency strongly encourages physicians to provide lead screening testing to children presenting, who are attempting to enroll in Head Start. Head Start programs are required to ensure that all enrolled children between the ages of 12 months and 72 months of age receive a lead toxicity screening.

The requirements for a child enrolled in Head Start are:

- For a child enrolled before the age of 12 months, the program must obtain documentation that blood lead tests were conducted for the child at the ages of 12 and 24 months;
- If there is no documentation that a blood lead test was performed at 12 months, for a child enrolled between 12 and 24 months of age, a blood lead test must be performed as soon as possible. A second blood lead test will be required at 24 months of age;
- The program is required to obtain documentation that a blood lead test was performed at 24 months of age, or soon thereafter, for a child enrolled at age 24 months or older.

San Diego County ranks third in 2012 among California counties for having the highest number of lead poisoned children. Children living in San Diego County are particularly vulnerable because of the abundance of older housing stock and the proximity to the border where cultural traditions that may be associated with lead toxicity frequently accompany immigrant families into San Diego. Lead is a neurotoxin that is harmful to developing young children even at low levels and can cause irreversible damage to a developing brain and other body systems.

Please contact the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at (619) 692-8487 for further information about testing, case management services, education and outreach, or to request educational materials.

Live Well!

WILMA J. WOOTEN, M.D., M.P.H.

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