

Going Beyond Compliance

Lead Elimination is the Priority.

- ▶ The most effective way to protect employees from lead exposure is to eliminate or reduce lead hazards in the workplace. Wellness initiatives alone Do Not substitute employer mandated compliance with engineering controls, protective equipment, and OSHA standards.

Lead Exposures and Lead Poisoning are Preventable.

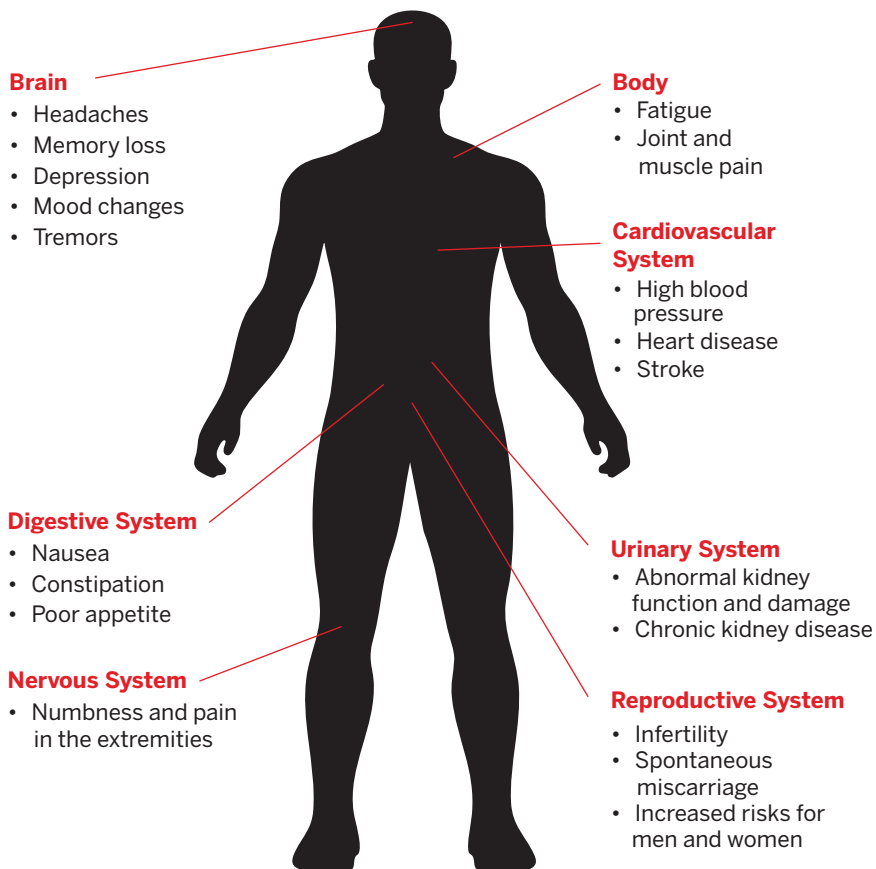
- ▶ OSHA standards require medical removal of workers in general industry with blood lead levels (BLLs) $\geq 60 \mu\text{g/dL}$ and $\geq 50 \mu\text{g/dL}$ for workers in the construction industry. However, overwhelming evidence shows that there is no safe level of lead. Even chronic low-level exposure (below $10 \mu\text{g/dL}$) contributes to serious health risks.

Established Health Effects of Chronic Low-Level Lead Exposure:

- ▶ Cardiovascular ($<10 \mu\text{g/dL}$): Hypertension, coronary artery disease, stroke
- ▶ Renal ($<5\text{--}10 \mu\text{g/dL}$): Chronic kidney disease
- ▶ Neurological ($<10 \mu\text{g/dL}$): Peripheral neuropathy, cognitive and mood changes, tremors
- ▶ Reproductive ($<10 \mu\text{g/dL}$): adverse effects on male and female fertility

Health Effects of Lead Poisoning in Adults

Even low levels of lead can harm the body and cause serious health problems in adults.



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Purpose of this Guide

This resource highlights practical strategies that employers can adopt to complement (not replace) primary exposure source control measures, such as enclosures or appropriate ventilation. By investing in additional wellness programs tailored for lead-exposed workers, companies can help mitigate long-term disease risk, improve workplace culture, and demonstrate a visible commitment to employee health.

Wellness Strategies for Lead-Exposed Workplaces

The strategies outlined may not substitute eliminating or reducing lead at the source; they serve as low-cost complements to help lower chronic disease risk. Workplace wellness functions as an important extension of regulatory compliance. A visible investment in workers' long-term health demonstrates a commitment to wellness and can strengthen morale, retention, and productivity.

1. Nutrition Support

- ▶ Offer access to nutritious whole foods rich in iron, calcium, and vitamin C (e.g., dairy products, leafy greens, seeds, nuts, citrus, berries). These nutrients reduce gastrointestinal absorption of lead and support overall health.
- ▶ Encourage employees to start each workday with a nutritious breakfast.
- ▶ Provide nutrition guidance tailored for workers in lead-exposed industries (see supplement attached).
- ▶ Integrate nutrition into workplace wellness efforts (e.g., vending machine policies, lunchroom options).
- ▶ Find a local nutrition expert to host an educational session with employees.
 - ▶ eatright.org/find-a-nutrition-expert

2. Movement and Stress Reduction

- ▶ Offer short activity or mindfulness breaks during shifts. Even brief stretching, walking, or relaxation practices can reduce blood pressure and stress, helping offset cardiovascular risks linked to chronic lead exposure.
- ▶ Share information about community physical activity resources or subsidize access to local gyms, walking programs, or wellness classes.
 - ▶ gastateparks.org/AllParks
 - ▶ ymca.org/find-your-y

3. Health Screening and Monitoring

- ▶ Partner with health departments to offer health fairs for employees
- ▶ Collaborate with occupational health providers to arrange baseline and periodic screenings for blood pressure, kidney function, and blood lead levels (BLLs).
 - ▶ dph.georgia.gov/public-health-districts



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Federal and State Resources to Strengthen Workplace Wellness

1. [Total Worker Health® Toolkit \(CDC/NIOSH\)](#): provides practical guidance for integrating traditional occupational safety programs with broader wellness efforts. It includes strategies, templates, and case examples that employers can use to reduce workplace hazards while supporting worker health and well-being.
2. [Georgia Tech Consultation Program](#): provides free, confidential, on-site consultation services for small companies within Georgia (fewer than 250 employees and not more than 500 employees corporate-wide) that need assistance in occupational safety and health. Employers can request a consultation to help their company:
 - ▶ Comply with OSHA rules and regulations
 - ▶ Identify and quantify physical hazards (such as lead exposures)
 - ▶ Evaluate technical programs (such as hazard communication or respiratory protection)
 - ▶ Correct hazards and improve safety and health management systems

Resources

1. Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Lead (general industry), 29 C.F.R. §1910.1025. U.S. Department of Labor. Updated 2024. Accessed August 28, 2025. <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.1025>
2. National Toxicology Program. NTP monograph on health effects of low-level lead. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences; 2012. Accessed August 28, 2025. https://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/ntp/ohat/lead/final/monographhealtheffectslowlevellead_newissn_508.pdf
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Fundamentals of Total Worker Health® approaches: Essential elements for advancing worker safety, health, and well-being. DHHS Publication No. 2017-112. Published 2017. Accessed August 28, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2017-112/>
4. Georgia Institute of Technology. OSHA Consultation Program (21d). Safety, Health, and Environmental Services (SHES); 2023. Accessed August 28, 2025. <https://oshainfo.gatech.edu/georgia-tech-safety-health-and-environmental-services/osha-consultation-program/>

Learn More

- ▶ For more information about Workplace Lead Exposure **scan or click the QR code.**

