Guidelines for Screening and Reporting Elevated Blood Lead Levels

THERE IS NO SAFE LEVEL OF LEAD IN THE BODY – DAMAGE CAUSED BY LEAD POISONING IS PERMANENT AND IRREVERSIBLE!

RISK FACTOR ASSESSMENT

***For children ages 6 to 72 months, ask* at each child visit.**

1. Is your child living in or regularly visiting, or has your child lived in or regularly visited, a house or childcare center built before 1978?
2. Does your child have a sibling or playmate who has or has had lead poisoning?
3. Does your child come in contact with an adult who works in an industry or has a hobby that uses lead (battery factory, steel smelter, stained glass, fishing or hunting)?
4. Has your child spent more than 1 week in South or Central America, Africa or Asia since their last blood test?
5. Does anyone in your family use ethnic or folk remedies, cosmetics or eat candies or use pottery imported from South or Central America, Africa or Asia?

If the answer is YES or UNKNOWN to any of the questions, a blood lead test is necessary.

TESTING REQUIREMENTS

Children enrolled in Medicaid are **required** to have a blood lead test at 12 and 24 months. Any child between 24 and 36 months (ages 3 to 6) who has never been tested should be tested **regardless of risk**. These are federal requirements.

Recommended Medical and Case Management

Find the child's blood lead level (BLL) across the top, then read down that column for the recommended actions. Values are in µg/dL. Actions (A)–(E) are explained in the next section.

Action / blood lead level (BLL)	< 3.5 µg/dL	3.5–9 µg/dL	10–19 µg/dL	20–44 µg/dL	45–69 µg/dL	70 or higher µg/dL
Confirmatory blood lead test	No	Within 3 months, venous or capillary	Within 1 month, venous or capillary	Within 2 weeks, venous or capillary	Within 48 hours, **venous preferred**	Within 24 hours, **venous only**
Hospitalization	No	No	No	No	No, if home is lead-safe	**Yes, Medical emergency**
Chelation therapy (A)	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Blood lead level retest	No	See Retest Chart	See Retest Chart	See Retest Chart	See Retest Chart	See Retest Chart
Referrals (B)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
History and physical (C)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lead poisoning education (D)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reducing exposure and absorption (E)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

If the child's blood lead level persists between 10–19 µg/dL (2 blood lead tests 3 months apart) proceed according to the level of care for 20–44 µg/dL.

Follow-up Actions and Care

(A) Chelation Therapy

If chelation therapy is indicated, immediately remove the child from the hazardous environment until the home is made lead-safe; however, if the home is already lead-safe, the child may remain in the home unless hospitalization is indicated.

(B) Referrals

Georgia Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP) will contact the local health department to assist in case management and conduct environmental investigations.

(C) History and physical

Take medical, environmental, and nutritional history; test for anemia and iron deficiency; assess neurological, psychosocial, and language development; screen all siblings under age 6; evaluate risk of other family members, especially pregnant women.

(D) Lead poisoning education

Discuss lead sources, effects, and hazards associated with living in and/or renovating a pre-1978 home during prenatal care and well-child care at 3, 6, and 12 months; explain what blood lead levels mean; resources are available online from CDC, EPA, and HUD.

(E) Reducing exposure and absorption

Discuss damp cleaning to remove lead dust on surfaces; eliminating access to deteriorating lead paint surfaces; and ensuring regular meals that are low in fat and rich in calcium and iron. Resources are available online from CDC, EPA, and HUD.

Retest Chart

Use this chart to determine when to retest children who are confirmed as lead poisoned.

Venous testing is strongly preferred, but capillary testing is acceptable.

Last confirmed BLL (µg/dL)	Retest if BLL has NOT DROPPED at least 3 µg/dL over at least 3 months	Retest if BLL HAS DROPPED at least 3 µg/dL over at least 3 months
3.5–9	3 months	6 months
10–19	1-3 months	3 months
20–24	2 weeks-1 month	1 month
25–44	2 weeks -1 month	1 month
45–69	As soon as possible	As soon as possible
≥ 70	As soon as possible	As soon as possible

Retesting should occur until the blood lead level is less than 3.5 µg/dL for six months, all lead hazards have been removed, housing is made lead-safe, and no new exposure exists.

For more information, visit the Healthy Homes and Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program.
https://dph.georgia.gov/healthy-homes-and-childhood-lead-poisoning-prevention