

Where can a blood lead test be taken?

Environmental Health Centre

An appointment can be made by phoning 8638 4100 or visiting the centre.

SA Pathology

Pregnant women who have routine blood tests at SA Pathology may request extra blood be taken for lead analysis. A consent form needs to be completed and is available from SA Pathology staff.

For more information

Yorke and Northern Local Health Network
Environmental Health Centre
117 Gertrude Street
Port Pirie SA 5540
Telephone: (08) 8638 4100
sahealth.sa.gov.au/ehc

 Follow us at: facebook.com/YNLHN



Health
Yorke and Northern
Local Health Network



This document has been reviewed and endorsed by Yorke and Northern Local Health Network consumers and the community.

© Yorke and Northern Local Health Network, Government of South Australia. All rights reserved.



Pregnancy and lead

Environmental Health Centre

Protect your baby

Pregnant women pass lead to their unborn babies through their bloodstream. A newborn baby's blood lead level will be the same as his/her mother.

There is evidence that high lead levels can increase the risk of pre-term delivery, low birth weight, miscarriage and stillbirth.

All children under 4 years of age are at a greater risk than adults and other children.

This is because:

- Children absorb more of the lead that is taken into their bodies than adults
- Their developing brains and nervous systems are more vulnerable
- Normal behaviours of young children like crawling, chewing on objects and hand-to-mouth activities make them more likely to come into contact with lead and swallow it

Regular washing and drying your hands is one of the most effective ways to keep lead out of your body.

Create a safe environment for your new baby

- Seal all cracks and gaps in ceilings and walls
- Damp dust the tops of ceiling fans and light fittings
- Wash curtains and make sure windows seal well, and keep them shut on windy days
- Shampoo carpets (the Environmental Health Centre has a free carpet shampooer that you can borrow)
- Place baby's cot/bassinet away from windows and curtains

Renovation always creates dust, which can severely impact those living in the home at the time. Ensure pregnant and breastfeeding women, along with young children, are protected during renovation. The best method to do this is for them to stay somewhere else.

The Environmental Health Centre can provide you with information on how to best set up the nursery for your expected child. A home visit can be arranged by calling 8638 4100.

Eating healthy food helps reduce the amount of lead that your body absorbs

Ensure an adequate diet by including:

Calcium

- Dairy including milk, cheese, custard and yoghurt

Fibre

Grainy breads and cereals, whole fruits and vegetables.

Iron

Red meat, chicken, fish, eggs, lentils, dark green leafy vegetables.

Water

Do not make formula, drinks or sterilise bottles with rainwater.

Fruit and vegetables

Choose a variety of types and colours of fresh fruit and vegetables that are in season.

Thoroughly wash all fruit and vegetables prior to storage and eating.

Before consuming home grown fruits and vegetables please consult with the Environmental Health Centre.

Who should be tested?

- Pregnant women and women planning a pregnancy should be tested because lead in the blood is passed from the mother to her unborn baby
- Babies and pre-school children should have regular tests as they are at increased risk of elevated blood lead levels
- All Environmental Health Centre services are free of charge