

## Recent Changes in Lead Poisoning and How It Impacts Your Patients

Lead poisoning is the number one environmental health problem for children, but the new changes may not be enough to help your patients. Read on for more information on how we can make a difference in these children's lives. I can help your patients who are found to have lead poisoning. This is the latest information and research on lead, lead hazards, lead poisonings, and what can be done.

Investigations help find the source(s) of lead that is causing an increase in blood lead levels. Remove this source and blood lead levels go back down. In Texas, only a Licensed Lead Risk Assessor can do these investigations. That's me. When you have a patient with lead levels in their blood, have them call me to do an investigation and quickly remove the problem.

Historically, Dallas-Fort Worth has not been known as a major problem area for lead poisoning. However, this has recently changed. These changes were caused by

1. On January 4, 2012, The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) lowered of lead poisoning from 10µg/dL to 5µg/dL. The primary reason for this change is a result from the research outlined below.
2. On June 13, 2012, the National Toxicology Program released the latest research showing that there is now sufficient evidence showing that less than 5µg/dL of lead in the blood can cause a variety of problems. The latest research shows that blood lead levels less than 5µg/dL (specifically around 2µg/dL) done by the National Toxicology Program of the Department of Health and Human Resources can cause:
  - a) Decreased academic achievement (poor grades)
  - b) Decreased cognitive measures (thinking skills)
  - c) Decreased IQ
  - d) Increased incidence of attention related behaviors (ADD & ADHD)
  - e) Increase in problem behaviors

While the research mentions <5µg/dL, it is important to understand that damage has been shown to start at 2µg/dL. This figure can be seen by actually reading the full report. If your practice is more pro-active or practices preventative medicine, you would be more interested in the 2µg/dL level.

3. On October 25, 2011, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reiterated that lead poisoning continues to be the number one environmental health threat to children ages six and under in the United States.

The Texas Department of State Health Service (TDSHS) lead (Pb) blood test recommendations suggest children should have a blood lead test at each well-care visit. This can end up being up to 16 tests by the time a child turns 6. It is conceivable that in your practice, you may find that:

- Around 30 to 40 of your patients are officially lead poisoned (5µg/dL)

- And around 150 to 300 of your patients are being permanently damaged by lead ( $2\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  levels).

*Figures based on National Institutes of Health and the Texas Department of State Health Services records.*

Note: TDSHS actual figures show 36% or more than 1 out of 3 children have  $\geq 2\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ .

## Verification

If you would like to review any of the reports associated with the above research, please visit [www.deanlovvorn.com/pediatricians.html](http://www.deanlovvorn.com/pediatricians.html) for links to the studies and notices.

## What You Can Do

$20\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  or greater lead blood levels are still handled the same way. An Environmental Lead Investigation request (PB 101) is sent to the Texas Child Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (TXCLPPP). They will send out a Lead Risk Assessor, like myself, and will begin an investigation to locate the source(s) of lead that is causing the problem

$10\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  to  $19.9\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  lead blood levels can be either of the two following options ...

1. Verified by 2 venous tests spaced 3 months (12 weeks) apart. If the second blood lead test continues to fall within the  $10\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  to  $19.9\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  range, then a report is issued as mentioned above.
2. Parents want an immediate response, rather than waiting three months. In this case, you can give them my name and telephone number to do a blood lead investigation.

$2\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  to  $9.9\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  lead blood levels at this time is not handled by the TXCLPPP, even though the child is officially lead poisoned. To find the source(s) of lead causing the problems, parents will need to contact me directly or another Lead Risk Assessor. Preferably, they will contact a Lead Risk Assessor that has experience, like me, in  $2\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  to  $9.9\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  investigations.



My name is Dean Lovvorn and I specialize in lead (Pb), lead hazards and lead poisonings. However, my forte and specific interest is in blood lead investigations of children in the  $2\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  to  $9\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  of lead in the blood.

Put Your Contact Information Here

You may also want to include business cards in your mailings