

Providing a Barrier Between your Children and Lead Hazards



Florida Department of Health
in Miami-Dade County
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program
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Planting the Appropriate Ground Cover

Lead Poisoning and Soil

Prevention

What is lead poisoning?

- Lead is a metal found in many things around us, including lead-based paint, dust, soil, water, and lead-glazed pottery
- You can eat, drink, or breathe in lead.
- When too much lead gets into your body, it is called lead poisoning
- Children are at greater risk than adults
- Lead poisoning can cause learning, hearing, and behavioral problems

Why is soil a problem?

- Contamination of soil has been linked to weathering of exterior leaded paint, fall-out from past use of leaded gasoline, and lead smelters.
- There is greater chance of contact with lead in the soil if there is not a good stand of grass or other ground cover.
- Any time soil is bare and exposed there is a chance that lead dust can be generated.



How are children at risk?

- When children play in bare areas of the yard and along the house foundation, they can come in contact with lead contaminated soil easily.
- Children can swallow the dust, eat the soil directly, or place in their mouths objects that have come in contact with contaminated soil.
- Lead dust can also be carried into the home on shoes, clothing, and toys.

What are some problem areas around the home?

- **Soil near home**
Lead-based paint on exterior surfaces goes through a great deal of weathering. As the paint breaks down, the lead drops to the ground and produces a region of high lead contamination.
- **Soil near street**
Soil near busy streets can contain large amounts of lead due to the past use of leaded gasoline.
- **Play areas**
Play areas can be a common source of lead because of the bare soil
- **Pet areas**
Frequently the soil is bare due to the constant movement of the animal



How can I protect my children?

- Plant shrubs near the walls of the home to prevent contact with contaminated soil
- Replace or cover the soil with uncontaminated soil, mulch, a good stand of grass, shrubs, pavement, or concrete.
- Re-sod or reseed any bare spots in the yard. A healthy stand of grass will keep the dust down.
- Do not grow vegetables and other edible plants along the edges of your home
- Leave shoes at the door before entering home.
- Wash children's hands and toys after playing outside

Shrubs to Consider:

Aralias

Size: 2-25 feet

Light: full sun to partial shade

Blue Porterweed

Size: 12-36 feet

Light: full sun to partial shade

Butterfly Bush

Size: 6-12 feet

Light: full sun to partial shade



Crepe Myrtle (dwarf)

Size: 8-25 feet

Light: full sun



Croton

Size: 5-10 feet

Light: full sun

Dracaena

Size: 15 feet

Light: partial to full shade

Dwarf Schefflera

Size: 6-15 feet

Light: full sun to partial shade



Jamaica Caper

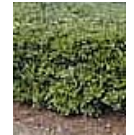
Size: 18 feet

Light: full sun to partial shade

Pittosporum

Size: 10-15 feet

Light: full sun to partial shade



Plumbago

Size: 3-10 feet

Light: full sun

Podocarpus

Size: 5-40 feet

Light: full sun to partial shade



Saw Palmetto

Size: 3-8 feet

Light: full sun to partial shade



Spicewood

Size: 5-25 feet

Light: partial shade

Thryallis

Size: 3-5 feet

Light: full sun to partial shade



Varnish Leaf

Size: 18 feet

Light: full sun to partial shade