



ALLEGHENY COUNTY

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Health Department Presents Inaugural Allegheny County Lead Report

PITTSBURGH – The Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) presented its inaugural [lead report](#) earlier today at the Board of Health meeting.

Lead is a neurotoxin commonly found in our daily lives, and lead exposure can come from multiple sources: pre-1978 lead paint and dust, water from lead pipes, soil, ceramic plates, bowls, and glasses, and imported candy, toys, cosmetics, and jewelry. Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children.

Findings of the lead report include:

- Blood lead levels among the county's children are, on average, going down.
- The percentage of all children with an elevated blood lead level of 5 µg/dl (micrograms per deciliter) is going down, although it has not changed significantly over the last year.
- The number of children under 6 years of age that are being tested is going up significantly, thanks to the countywide requirement enacted last year, and implemented in January; projection of more than 23,000 children tested in 2018, which is more than double the number of children tested in 2010.
- More children are getting their capillary tests confirmed with a venous test.
- There are still communities with significantly higher numbers and percentages of children with confirmed blood lead levels of 5 µg/dl or above.

"I was honored to be asked by County Executive Rich Fitzgerald to serve as Chair of the county's Lead Task Force in 2017. One of our recommendations of the was to provide regular reporting on the issue to the public, and we are proud to present this first ever annual lead report that fulfills this recommendation," said Health Department Director Dr. Karen Hacker. "The findings in this report demonstrate progress, but there is still work to be done, as far too many children are still at risk for lead exposure."

The Health Department's lead exposure strategy includes surveillance, prevention, education through its "Get Ahead of Lead" campaign, and intervention.

For any child under the age of 6 with a confirmed lead level of 5 µg/dl or above, the Health Department offers a free lead home investigation. Blood lead level testing is also offered at two Health Department [locations](#), and is free to those that are uninsured and underinsured.

In addition, Allegheny County Economic Development provides supplementary resources to make your home lead safe through its Allegheny Lead Safe Homes Program (<http://bit.ly/2vcJMZR>).

For more information about lead exposure in our county, visit: <http://bit.ly/2M3ZoW7>.

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