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FIRING RANGES

The Airborne Lead Dust Hazard

Shooter's Guide

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THE AIRBORNE LEAD DUST HAZARD

Exposure to lead dust and fumes
at the firing range may harm the
health of:

Firearm instructors

Other employees

Shooters

The firing range safety plan
should:








Protect their health and

Minimize contamination to
the environment

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LEAD DUST IN A FIRING RANGE

Airborne lead dust is created by:

-  Exploding lead styphnate primers
-  Friction from the lead slug against the gun barrel
-  Lead slugs hitting the bullet trap, walls, floors, or ceiling of the range
-  Spent bullets and settled dust
-  Improper range-cleaning methods disturbing settled dust
-  Poor indoor range ventilation
-  Outdoor weather conditions

Other High Lead Dust Sources

Bullet loading creates a fine dust that is very difficult to clean.

Melting lead to cast bullets produces a fume, which turns into tiny dust particles that can stay in the air for up to 10 hours. A person can easily breathe in this fine dust.

The dust also can contaminate surfaces.

NEVER load bullets or melt lead

- In an unventilated area
- Inside the home
- Anywhere children may live or play

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Lead Dust Can Be Carried Home!

When employees and shooters are in the firing range, lead dust can:

- Settle on their bodies
- Settle on their hair
- Settle on their clothes
- Be picked up on their shoes

Then the dust can be carried to their cars and homes, where it can harm their family and children.

HEALTH EFFECTS

Lead is a strong poison that serves no known use once absorbed by the body. Lead dust can enter the body by breathing or eating.

The body stores lead in the:

- BLOOD - for about 1 month
- BODY ORGANS - for several months
- BONES - for decades

It affects the:

- Brain and nervous system
- Digestive system
- Reproductive system
- Kidneys
- Ability to make blood

Small amounts of lead can build up in the body and may cause temporary symptoms or permanent damage.

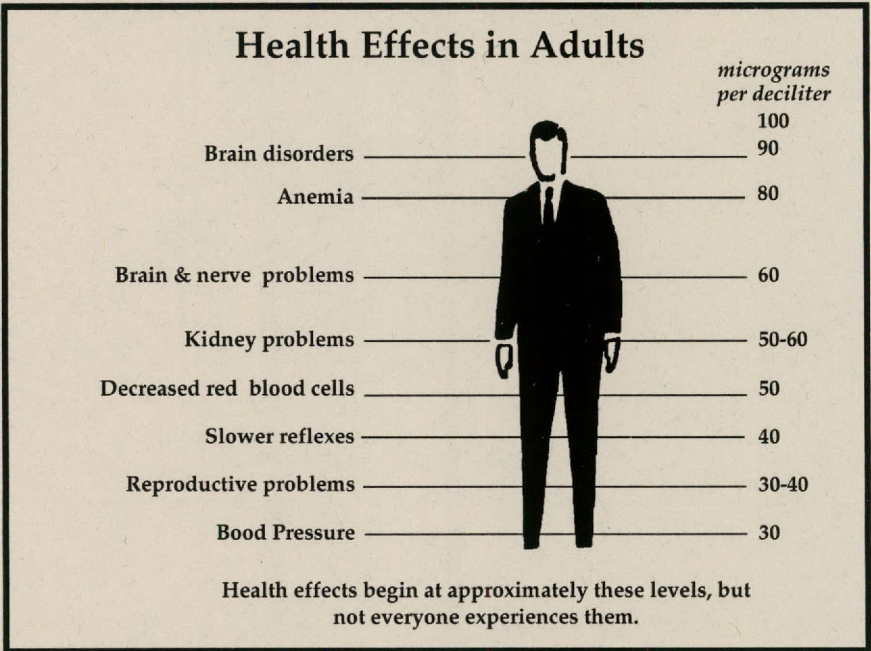
To find the amount of lead in the body, a health professional can take a blood sample from an adult or child and have it analyzed.

An elevated blood lead level is a sign that lead is building up in the body faster than it can be removed.

Adults

Adults can absorb lead at work or from hobbies. Lead dust and fumes can enter the body by:

- Breathing in lead dust and fumes
- Swallowing lead when drinking, eating, or smoking in contaminated areas
- Not washing their hands and faces after being in a contaminated area

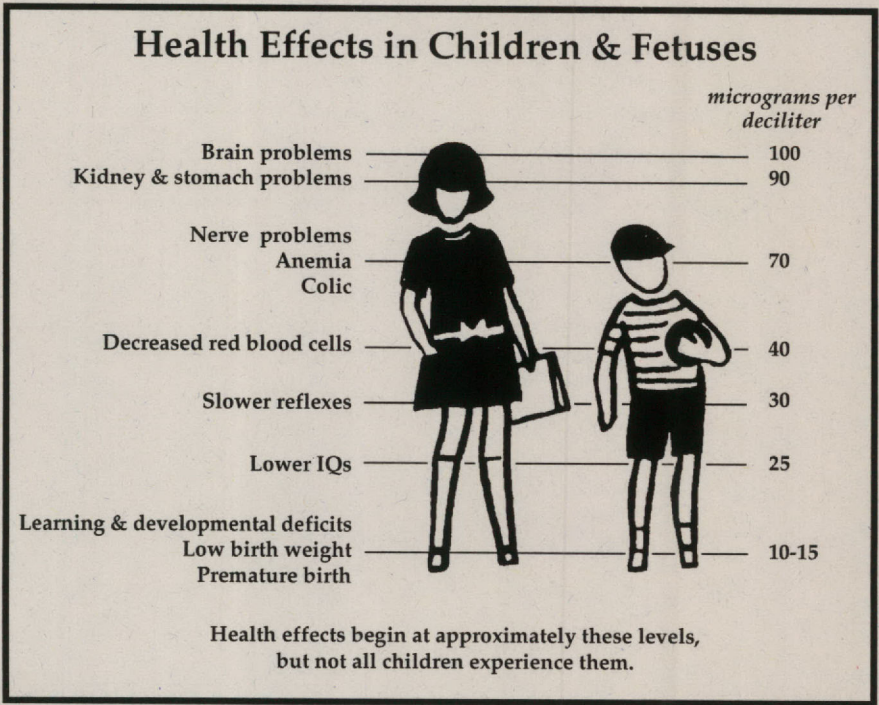


Children

Toys and other things children handle can get lead on them when parents bring lead dust home on clothes, shoes, and other objects.

Even small amounts of lead can harm a young child's developing brain and nervous system, and other organs.

Lead absorbed by children can cause permanent damage. The child may have learning problems and not grow as he or she should.



REFERENCES

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Juhasz AA, *The Reduction of Airborne Lead in Indoor Firing Ranges by Using Modified Ammunition*, US Department of Commerce, 1977.

ATSDR *Toxicological Profiles*, 1999.

OSHA, *Occupational Lead Standard*, 29 CFR 1910.1025.

WHAT EMPLOYEES AND SHOOTERS CAN DO

Use the ventilation systems.

Make sure they are working properly.

Wash hands and face before eating - drinking - smoking.

Wash hands and face before leaving range.

Wash range clothes separately from family's clothes.

Always load bullets in a ventilated area.

Do not load bullets in the home or in areas where children live or play.

Do not allow children into the bullet-loading area.

Keep bullet-loading area clean by using a high-phosphate detergent.

ProtectTexas™

Texas Department of Health

For more information on lead exposure and firing ranges contact:

Environmental Epidemiology and Toxicology Division
Texas Department of Health
1100 W. 49th St.
Austin, Texas 78756
512-458-7269
TOLL FREE 1-800-588-1248
FAX 512-458-7699

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