**Screening for Lead Poisoning**

**Did you know? In Philadelphia, 4.2% of children <6 years old have an elevated blood level. This is higher than in Flint, Michigan!**

* All of our patients should have 2 lead levels obtained by 24 months.
* Screen for lead levels at 9-12 months and again at 24 months.
* Check to see if your patient has had their level drawn at Well-child and Sick Clinic visits. If they haven’t, order it!
* Give them the laminated information card with the picture below to bring to the lab on the 2nd floor in the CUC.

**What to say to our families about lead screening:**

* Lead poisoning can cause serious harm to your child’s health. Even a small amount of lead in a child hurts the brain and can slow down growth and development. It can cause behavioral problems and make it hard for your child to learn.
* Most children with lead poisoning will not look or act sick. The only way to know if your child has lead poisoning is with a lead test. A small amount of blood is taken from your child’s finger or arm. The test will find out how much lead is in the body.
* Older homes built before 1978 often have lead paint. When the old paint cracks and peals, it makes lead dust. Most children get lead poisoning from swallowing and breathing in lead dust that gets onto their hands and toys.
* Children between 9 months and 2 years old are at highest risk for lead poisoning because they are curious and like to put things in their mouths. That’s why your child should have 2 lead tests done by the time he or she is 2 years old.



Other helpful resources on what to do about an elevated lead level and anticipatory guidance for families:

* <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/acclpp/actions_blls.html>
* <http://box5646.temp.domains/~genpedsc/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ReducingLeadDoorEng.pdf>
* <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tools/leadglossary_508.pdf>