



Poison Control Warns Parents About Lead Poisoning – The Summer Disease

San Francisco – August 10, 2015 – From China and Antarctica to Ohio and California, no nation or state is free of lead poisoning. It affects humans and wildlife, children and adults, with children being the most susceptible to harm from lead.

Wildfires, solar radiation, dirt, home renovations and lead paint exposure are all suspect in the summer disease called lead poisoning. One million children today are affected by lead poisoning, but if parents know what to look for and what to do, lead poisoning is 100 percent preventable.

“Lead poisoning is one of the most important and most preventable pediatric environmental diseases today. Lead poisoning can cause a variety of medical problems, including learning disabilities, anemia, growth problems and behavioral issues,” said Cyrus Rangan, MD, a pediatrician and medical toxicologist with California Poison Control (www.calpoison.org). He added that children are most commonly exposed to lead by ingesting paint chips or paint dust and by eating dirt that is contaminated with lead. In the summer, he added, loose dry soil may lead to an increased risk in lead exposure in children who play outside in the dirt on hot, dry days.

“This year, because of the drought persisting throughout the Western states, soils are much dryer, leading to an easier pathway of exposure to young children playing outside,” said Dr. Rangan.

“Older buildings with lead paint can also contribute to the build-up of lead in nearby urban garden dirt,” Dr. Rangan said. “Washing vegetables from the garden may help reduce exposure to surface lead. Teach children not to eat food from the garden without washing it first.”

Dr. Rangan suggests that some ways to prevent lead poisoning in children include good supervision, watching what they put into their mouths, having them wash their hands frequently and providing a diet with appropriate amounts of iron and calcium. Children who are undernourished may absorb more lead into their bodies than children with well-balanced diets.

About CPCS

You can learn more about a variety of poison issues by following CPCS on Facebook at California Poison Control and on Twitter @poisoninfo. Sign up for weekly safety text messages to your cell phone by texting TIPS to 69866. CPCS is dedicated to providing residents with the most up-to-date

information and 24-hour help in case of poisoning. In case of an accidental poisoning, consumers should immediately call **1-800-222-1222** for advice.

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