LEARN ABOUT Lead in Folk Remedies

Protect Your Family from Lead Poisoning

WHAT ARE FOLK REMEDIES?

Folk remedies are also known as home remedies or traditional, folk, natural or herbal medicine. Folk remedies are used around the world and are very common in different ethnic and cultural groups. Folk remedies can have herbs, minerals, metals, or animals products in them. Lead and other heavy metals may be put into some folk remedies because these metals are thought to help some health problems. Lead and other heavy metals can also get into folk remedies during grinding, coloring, from the package, or if the ingredients are grown in soil that has lead in it.

CAN LEAD IN FOLK REMEDIES HURT MY CHILD?

Lead can hurt your child or unborn baby. Lead can make it hard for children to learn, pay attention and behave.

HOW DO I KNOW IF A FOLK REMEDY HAS LEAD IN IT?

You cannot tell by looking at or tasting a folk remedy if it has lead in it. Many folk remedies have a lot of lead in them, so even small amounts of these remedies can hurt your child.

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILD HAS LEAD POISONING?

Most children with lead poisoning do not look or act sick. The only way to know if your child has lead poisoning is to get a blood test for lead. If you think your child has taken a folk remedy that has lead in it or you don’t know, ask your doctor to test your child for lead.

WHAT ARE COMMON FOLK REMEDIES THAT CONTAIN LEAD?

- Gesta and Azaleon (also known as Alarcon, Coral, Lukita, Marisa Luzia, or Ruda) are fine powders used in Latino cultures for upper respiratory and other illnesses. The powders are often yellow, orange and/or red and have been found to contain up to 90% lead.

- Kahl and Surmasare black powders used in South Asian and Middle Eastern cultures mainly as a cosmetic, but also on the nose of a newborn child and as an ointment to treat skin infections.

- Sindoor is a red powder typically used by the Asian Indian community.

- Pay-loo-ah is a red powder used in Southeast Asian country to treat children with rash or high fever.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ON FOLK REMEDIES CONTAINING LEAD?

State of California Department of Public Health Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch http://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CIP/CF.htm

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/ips/folkmedicine.htm

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LATINO HERBS

Remedies

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