

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR BLOOD LEAD LEVELS IN ADULTS

The following categories represent general guidelines. Primary management of lead poisoning is source identification and removal from exposure. A single BLL does not reflect cumulative body burden, nor predict long-term effects. **Recommendations for medical treatment of children and adults differ.*** Treatment decisions should be made in consultation with a physician knowledgeable about lead poisoning medical management. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that the mean BLL for US adults age 20 years and older is 1 µg/dL.

Blood Lead Level (µg/dL)	Management Recommendations
<5	No action needed
5-9	Discuss health risks Minimize exposure Consider removal for pregnancy and certain medical conditions Monitor BLL
10-19	Decrease exposure Remove from exposure for pregnancy Consider removal for certain medical conditions or BLL \geq 10 for an extended period of time
20-29	Remove from exposure for pregnancy Remove from exposure if repeat BLL in 4 weeks remains \geq 20 Annual lead medical exam recommended
30-79	Remove from exposure Prompt medical evaluation Chelation not indicated unless BLL > 50 with significant symptoms
\geq 80	Remove from exposure Urgent medical evaluation Chelation may be indicated if symptomatic and /or BLL \geq 100

Note: OSHA job protections apply whenever a licensed health care provider removes an individual from lead exposure due to an elevated blood lead level or a medical condition that places them at greater risk from lead exposure.

For Additional Information

Medical Guidelines – “Medical Guidelines for the Lead-Exposed Worker”

www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/olppp/Documents/medgdln.pdf

Note: California Department of Public Health recommendations now include consideration of removal from lead exposure for pregnancy and certain medical conditions at a BLL of 5-9 µg/dL.

Cal/OSHA Lead Standards – www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/olppp/Pages/Links.aspx

Health care providers with questions - Call (510) 620-5757, (866) 627-1587 (toll-free in CA)

***Management Guidelines on Childhood Lead Poisoning**

www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/clppb/documents/Provider%20mgmt%20guides.pdf

www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/clppb or call (510) 620-5600