



## **MONMOUTH COUNTY REGIONAL HEALTH COMMISSION NO. 1**

1540 WEST PARK AVE., TINTON FALLS, NJ 07724

[www.mcrhc.org](http://www.mcrhc.org)

### **Press Release**

Contact: David Henry

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March 15, 2021

### **Free Lead Poisoning Testing Available in Monmouth County**

The Monmouth County Regional Health Commission No. 1 (MCRHC) is partnering with the Community Affairs and Resources Center (CARC) to offer free screenings for lead poisoning and testing of household items twice a month.

Nearly half a million children living in the United States have elevated blood lead levels that could cause significant damage to their health, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Elevated blood lead levels in children are based on a test result of 5 micrograms per deciliter or higher. In New Jersey, more than 3,500 children tested positive for lead poisoning in 2018. Exposures to lead can interfere with normal brain development in young children, causing irreversible injury.

According to Health Officer David Henry, in the past lead poisoning has been associated with lead-based paint and those living in homes built before 1978. Henry says, "We are seeing an increased number of children with elevated blood lead levels who are exposed to lead from household items like toys and spices." Children can also be exposed to lead from additional sources including contaminated drinking water, take-home exposures from a parent's workplace, and lead in soil.

Parents can reduce a child's exposure to lead in many ways. Here are some simple ways to protect your family:

1. Get your Home Tested. If you live in a home built before 1978, you may want to consider getting a lead inspection. Call CARC at 732-774-3282 for more information or visit [www.carcnj.org](http://www.carcnj.org).
2. Get your Child Tested. Children should be screened for lead exposure at 12 months and 24 months of age or once between 3 and 6 years of age, if not previously screened. If you suspect your child may have been exposed to lead, talk to your doctor or local

health department about lead testing. Or call Monmouth County Regional Health Commission for a free screening.

3. Get Help: If your child is tested and has an elevated blood lead level, please contact your local health department. A public health nurse can visit your home to provide education and important information about possible sources of lead and can help you access any needed services.
4. Get the Facts. For more information, visit [www.mcrhc.org](http://www.mcrhc.org).

Blood lead level screenings through MCRHC and CARC are open to children ages 12 months to 6 years of age and pregnant women. Additionally, residents can make arrangements to bring in up to 3 household items for testing at certain sites. Items include plastic toys, jewelry, spices, and dishware. The program is funded by the New Jersey Department of Health.

The free childhood lead poisoning prevention program will be provided at various locations in Monmouth County and at MCRHC. On March 23<sup>rd</sup> from 2pm to 4pm, MCRHC will host a lead testing event in Tinton Falls. Registration for the event is required by calling 732-493-9520.

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The Monmouth County Regional Health Commission provides shared public health services to eighteen (18) towns: Allenhurst, Brielle, Deal, Fair Haven, Interlaken, Little Silver, Loch Arbour, Middletown, Monmouth Beach, Ocean Township, Rumson, Sea Bright, Sea Girt, Shrewsbury, Spring Lake, Spring Lake Heights, Tinton Falls, and West Long Branch.

