

# FIGHT LEAD WITH NUTRITION

The foods we prepare and serve to our families can help limit the absorption of lead. Three steps you can take when choosing and preparing food can make a difference:



1. Choose a range of nutrient-dense food for overall health and to help make sure you have enough iron, calcium and vitamin C in your body.
2. Eat regular meals and snacks.
3. When preparing food, be sure to wash and cook with safe water.



## LEAD FACTS

Lead isn't good for anyone's health, and it's especially bad for small children and pregnant women. Keep your family lead-safe by avoiding contact with it. You and your children could be exposed to lead from a variety of sources including: old paint, dust, dirt, pottery, make-up, toys and some home remedies. If you are concerned about contaminated water, check with local authorities for safe water recommendations. Use of an NSF-certified filter or bottled water for drinking, cooking and mixing baby formula may be required. If using a filter, make sure to change the filter cartridge by the date printed on the package. If you have any concerns about lead or your child's diet, talk to your doctor.

## KEY NUTRIENTS

### IRON & VITAMIN C

Iron can make it harder for lead to be absorbed in the body. Sources of iron include:

- Red meat, fish and chicken
- Green leafy vegetables, such as spinach, kale and collard greens
- Whole-grain: cereal, bread and pasta
- Dried fruit
- Beans, peas and lentils

Vitamin C is important for skin and bone health. Together with iron it may also help reduce lead absorption.

Vitamin C is found in many fruit and vegetables. Sources of vitamin C include:

- Citrus fruit, like oranges and grapefruit, and their juices
- Tomatoes and tomato juice
- Veggies such as peppers, broccoli, potatoes, Brussels sprouts and more!
- Fruit like peaches, strawberries, pears, watermelon and more!

### CALCIUM

Calcium keeps your bones strong and can help reduce lead absorption.

Sources of calcium include:

- Milk and milk products, like cheese and yogurt
- Green leafy vegetables, such as spinach, kale and collard greens
- Calcium-fortified orange juice
- Tofu
- Canned salmon and sardines (both with the bones in)



## LEAD RESOURCES

- Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) [www.michigan.deq](http://www.michigan.deq)
- Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program [www.michigan.gov/lead](http://www.michigan.gov/lead) call 888-322-4453
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead)
- Michigan Department of Occupational Health and Safety [www.michigan.gov/osh](http://www.michigan.gov/osh)

Original Source: Michigan State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture. (MSU Extension, East Lansing, MI 48824) This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned. 4P-Web-04:2016-RM/MR WCAG 2.0

## WHERE TO GET HELP

### Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The SNAP program (formerly called food stamps) provides low-income residents with money to purchase food, including:

- Fruit and vegetables
- Breads and cereals
- Dairy, meat, fish and poultry

You're also allowed to buy seeds and food-producing plants with your SNAP benefits to grow your own food.

Apply for SNAP [www.mibridges.michigan.gov](http://www.mibridges.michigan.gov) -or-

Call St. Clair County Health Department:  
WIC 810-987-8222  
Main line 810-987-5300

### Women, Infants & Children (WIC)

The WIC program provides food for pregnant or breastfeeding mothers, and for infants and children up to 5 years old. Services provided by WIC include:

- Nutrition education
- Breastfeeding support
- Insurance program enrollment
- Registered dietitian counseling

To apply for WIC, call 810-987-8222

### SCCHD Project Fresh

If you receive WIC benefits, you may be eligible to receive Project Fresh coupons to buy locally grown fruit and veggies! This program runs from June 1 through October 31 each year. For more information contact:

St. Clair County Health Department  
WIC at 810-987-8222  
MSU Extension at 810-989-6935

Service connects St. Clair County residents to community resources including food, transportation, education, health care, water filters and replacement cartridges. Locally funded by United Way. Contact them by phone at 211 or online at [www.211.org](http://www.211.org).

### Michigan State University Extension

Offers free nutrition education classes and soil testing for lead. Call 810-244-8500 or 810-989-6935

### Michigan Department of Environmental Quality—Safe Drinking Water Lab

[www.michigan.gov/deq](http://www.michigan.gov/deq)

For home water testing kit to send to the state lab for results

St. Clair County Health Department

[www.scchealth.co](http://www.scchealth.co)

Facebook /scchdmi

Twitter @scchdmi



### Sources

- Iron Deficiency Anemia Prevention: Diseases and Conditions.* Mayo Clinic. (2014). Retrieved from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/iron-deficiency-anemia/basics/prevention/con-20019327>
- Lead and a Healthy Diet: What You Can Do to Protect Your Child* [EPA-747-F01-004]. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics. (2001). Retrieved from <http://www2.epa.gov/sites/production/files/documents/nutrition.pdf>
- Learn About Lead* [overview and fact sheets]. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2015). Retrieved from <http://www.epa.gov/lead/learn-about-lead>
- Nutrition and Lead Poisoning Prevention.* Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. (2011). Retrieved from <http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/LeadNutrition.aspx>
- Soil Lead: Testing, Interpretation, and Recommendations.* University of Massachusetts Amherst, Soil and Plant Tissue Testing Laboratory. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://soiltest.umass.edu/fact-sheets/soil-lead-testing-interpretation-recommendations>

### Acknowledgments

These materials were funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) by way of Michigan State University Extension, and also by Hurley Children's Hospital. Produced by ANR Creative Services for MSU Extension (<http://msue.anr.msu.edu/>).

**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY** | **Extension**

**Created in collaboration with the Pediatric Public Health Initiative.**

### Other Resources