

Did you know that in 2019 only 68% of one-year olds and 38% of two-year olds were tested for lead? The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) set a testing goal of 75% for children one and two-years in age. Medicaid requires a blood lead test for all Medicaid enrolled and eligible one and two-year old children, while the Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommend testing for all one and two-year old children.

In partnership with the Iowa Institute of Public Health Research and Policy and the Childhood Lead Advisory Workgroup (CLAW), IDPH has revised its Childhood Lead Poisoning Risk Questionnaire tool and Blood Lead Testing Guidelines. The CLAW is a statewide group of pediatricians, nurses, public health professionals, housing officials, elected officials, and more. Updates were made to help increase testing rates for children under 3 years in age, especially children in high-risk areas of the state. A [YouTube](#) video was produced to explain the updates and provide guidance on using the questionnaire and blood lead testing.

This tool should be used for all children at well child visits between 6 months and 6 years of age. This testing and risk assessment schedule is in alignment with that of the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT). Again, it should be noted that a blood lead test is **required** on all children at 12 and 24 months of age. According to the AAP, “Blood lead concentrations of children who live in lead contaminated environments typically increase rapidly between 6 and 12 months of age, peak between 18 and 36 months of age, and then gradually decrease.” Emphasizing the need to test all children at 12 and 24 months of age, and assessing risk at all well child visits between 6 months and six years of age.

The newly revised questionnaire is a two-page document with questions related to lead exposure risks and testing guidelines. A questionnaire page is divided into three sections. The first section is designed to gather patient information like name, DOB, and primary address. This information can be used by providers and IDPH in tracking a child’s blood lead history and determining if additional testing or follow-up services are required.

In the next section of the questionnaire providers are reminded of testing requirements for children under three years in age. Guidance for testing children between 6 months and 6 years in age, based on questionnaire responses, is also provided in this section.

The most significant changes were made in the third part or question section. For example, there are fewer questions for parents or guardians to answer, seven versus ten. Each question was designed to be easier to understand and solicit a more accurate response from the parent or guardian. Additionally, more examples of typical sources of lead and lead activities found in Iowa were included for some questions. The question section includes questions for all risks of lead exposure, including age of housing a child lives in or visits, home renovations, chewed on objects, contact with another child with an elevated blood lead level, travel to or from a foreign country, hobbies or activities involving leaded materials, and use of products from other countries. Also, “Don’t Know” was added to the responses for parents or guardians that were

not certain about a question. Immediate testing is recommended when a response to any of the questions is “Yes” or “Don’t Know”.

When using this risk questionnaire, if there are yes or don’t know responses to any of the questions, you should:

- Provide education to the parents about the risks of lead and the benefits of nutrition, hygiene, and cleanliness
- Perform a blood lead test if the child is 3, 4, or 5 years in age.
- And consider the risks and benefits of testing at 6, 9, 15, 18, and 30 months of age.

If responses to all the questions are no, re-evaluate at every well child visit or more often if deemed necessary based on county lead risk factors, which can be found in the county lead report cards on the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention webpage.

This tool should be implemented in all hospitals, clinics, and provider offices in Iowa providing services to children under 6 years in age.

You can find this tool online at the Iowa Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program website pages for [Providers, Labs and Schools](#) and [All Resources](#). If you would like more information about this tool and how to implement it tool in your area, contact the Iowa Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at 800-972-2026.