

Lead In Drinking Water - Is There Lead In My Drinking Water?

Is there lead in my drinking water? Lead can be harmful to your health, but just how harmful depends on how much lead gets into your body, your health, and where the lead becomes stored in your body. This article provides information about lead in drinking water.

Like nitrate, it is difficult to understand why lead in drinking water is a potential health hazard or even a concern. Most people believe that their water comes from pure sources without any contamination or that the water has been treated, so there is not a problem. This is not the cause for lead. The primary source for lead in most drinking water sources is the piping used within a distribution system or the household plumbing. Other routes of lead exposure include: lead paint used in homes prior to 1978, dust or soil containing lead, food grown in contaminated soil or stored in poorly glazed pottery, and more.

**GET THE
LEAD OUT!**

Important information about
drinking water and lead



Lead The Concern:

Lead is a toxic metal that is harmful to human health; there is NO safe level for lead exposure. The degree of exposure depends on the concentration of lead, route of exposure (air, water, food), current medical condition, and age. It has been estimated that up to 20 % of the total lead exposure in children can be attributed to a waterborne route, i.e., consuming contaminated water. In addition, infants, fetuses, and young

children are particularly vulnerable to lead poisoning. This is because they usually consume more water and their bodies are actively developing, which facilitates the bioaccumulation of lead.

High levels of lead contamination in a child can result in convulsions, major neurological damage, organ failure, coma, and ultimately death. Moderate to low levels of exposure may result in hearing loss, inhibit growth, and cause learning disabilities. There may be no signs of lead poisoning or the signs could mimic a flu or other gastrointestinal disease. The symptoms may include: cramps, irritability, fatigue, vomiting, constipation, sleep disorder, poor appetite, and trouble sleeping. Unlike other contaminants, lead will accumulate within the body over time, i.e., bio-accumulate. Lead will tend to be stored in the brain, bones, kidneys and other major organs. It can be stored in child's blood for months and bones for many decades. Some of the effects of lead poisoning cannot be cured, but it is possible to reduce exposure to lead.



The Lead Source- One Source Drinking Water:

Drinking water is only one of the possible routes of exposure to lead contamination, but it is one of the easiest routes of contamination to reduce. The primary route for lead poisoning in drinking water is not old contamination of the water by leaded fuels, old batteries or some hazardous waste site, the primary route is the distribution system used to carry water to your home and more importantly the plumbing within your home. That is right: YOUR household plumbing may be the cause for lead in your drinking water. In older homes, lead was used to make the piping and/or solder. In homes, built prior to 1930's water pipes were primarily made from lead. These pipes can be identified because the piping tends to have a dull gray color, can be scratched with a key, and a magnet will not stick to the piping. In buildings built between the 1930's and early 1980's,

copper pipes were often used, but the solder contained elevated levels of lead. This does not mean that a newer home is safe from lead contamination; in fact, the available data suggests that buildings less than 5 years old can have high levels of lead.

Water Quality as it relates to Lead:

The water quality of your drinking water can have a great impact on the lead level of your water. If your water is soft or corrosive, this type of water can accelerate the leaching of lead and copper and other metals from your household plumbing and water fixtures. The signs of this type of problem would include: greenish rings (copper) around basins, metallic or bitter taste to your water especially in the mornings, and frequent leaks/evidence of corrosion of you household plumbing.

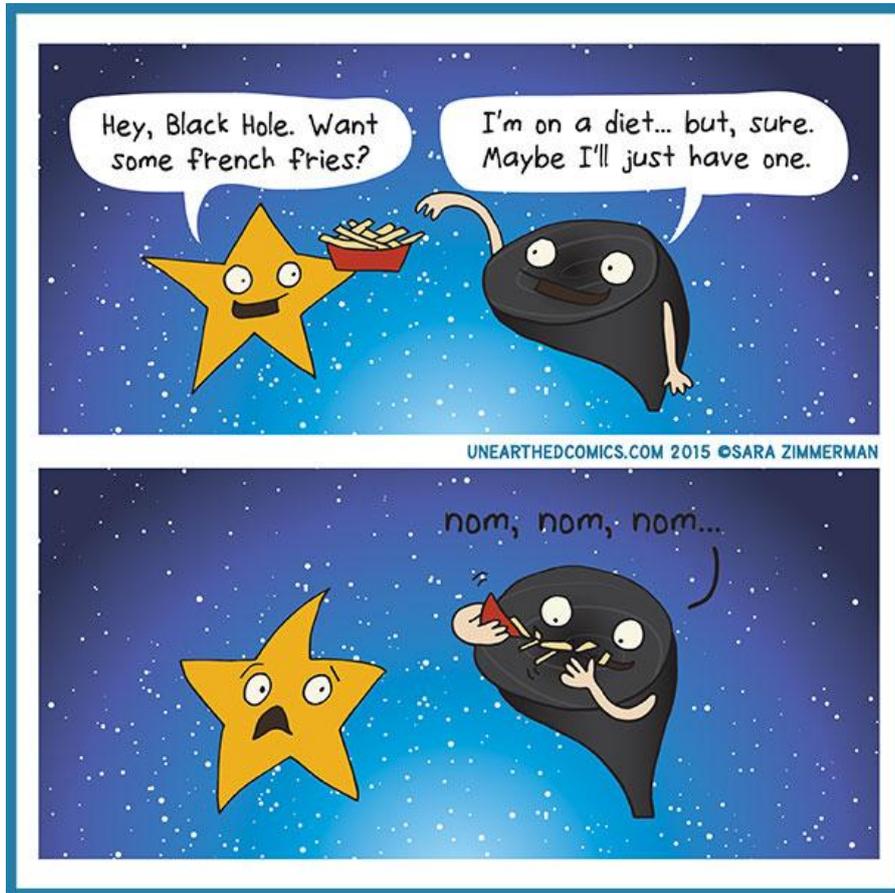
Lead Testing:

If you suspect that your water contains lead, it needs to be analyzed by a certified laboratory, not someone giving a free analysis to sell you some type of treatment systems. You can usually receive a free listing of commercial laboratories from your local county health department or state department of environmental protection. Have you water evaluated for lead, the certified laboratory should request a first draw, after flushing take a second sample and provide you with sampling instructions and containers. At this time, I would also recommend that you have the samples tested for copper and at least one of the samples tested for pH, alkalinity, calcium hardness, and total dissolved solids, plus have the laboratory calculate a corrosivity index.

RELAXING TIME

9	6			4				
		1						4
	8	3	6		1			
	3					7		
7			2		4			5
		5					1	
			8		2	1	7	
6						5		
				6			8	2

COMIC CORNER



Answer

9	6	2	7	4	5	8	3	1
5	7	1	9	3	8	6	2	4
4	8	3	6	2	1	9	5	7
2	3	6	1	5	9	7	4	8
7	1	9	2	8	4	3	6	5
8	4	5	3	7	6	2	1	9
3	5	4	8	9	2	1	7	6
6	2	8	4	1	7	5	9	3
1	9	7	5	6	3	4	8	2

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