

## **Lead Exposure *Diep Bao* FAQ** *(Updated 1-26-2023)*

### **What is harmful about lead?**

Lead is a heavy metal that enters the body mainly through ingestion or inhalation. Once in the bloodstream, lead can cause damage to many parts of the body, with the most significant potential harm being to the brain and nervous system. Small children are especially vulnerable because their brains and bodies are still developing.

### **Where does this product come from?**

The product is made in Vietnam.

### **Do all types of face cream for treating eczema have dangerous levels of lead?**

No. Speak with your child's medical provider about your health concerns for your child and they can assist you with a prescription or other recommendation for treating your child's eczema.

### **What are other creams people can use to treat eczema?**

Speak with your child's medical provider about your health concerns for your child and they can assist you with a prescription or other recommendation for treating your child's eczema.

### **Is this product sold in Oregon? If so, where? If not, where?**

Our current understanding is that this product is only available through online purchase, such as Facebook.

### **How many stores sell these products?**

We are not currently aware of any local stores selling this product.

### **How much of this product is sold in Oregon or to people living in Oregon?**

We do not yet know how widespread use of this product is in the community.

### **Is there a way to safely use this product?**

Until we know more about this product, we recommend that it not be used at all based on the significant amounts of lead found in the two samples we analyzed.

## What other products contain lead?

Lead-based paint in homes built prior to 1978 is the most common source of lead exposure for children. Old toys, charms, amulets, keys and other metals should be kept away from young children. Imported spices, such as turmeric, and cosmetics such as kohl, surma, and sindoor have also been identified as containing high levels of lead. You should ensure these products are safe before allowing young children to use them.

## What is considered lead poisoning, or an elevated blood lead level?

Currently, Oregon defines an elevated blood lead level as equal to or greater than 5 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood (5ug/dL). Oregon is likely to revise this definition to align with the current CDC reference value of 3.5 ug/dL.

## What are the short- and long-term health effects of lead exposure?

Lead is a poison that affects every organ and system in the body. Very high levels of lead exposure can cause coma, seizures and death. Even a little lead can make children slower learners. Other health effects include:

- Brain damage and lower intelligence.
- Behavior and learning problems.
- Hyperactivity.
- Impaired speech and language.
- Slowed growth.
- Kidney and liver damage.
- Hearing damage.

## What are the symptoms of lead poisoning?

Lead poisoning can occur without obvious symptoms. Possible signs and symptoms in children include:

- Tiredness or loss of energy.
- Hyperactivity.
- Irritability or crankiness.
- Reduced attention span.
- Poor appetite.

- Weight loss.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Constipation.
- Aches or pains in stomach.

### **How does lead enter the body?**

Lead primarily enters the body through ingestion (often from eating or swallowing dust or debris from hand-to-mouth behaviors) or inhalation (breathing in dust during work activities is the main exposure pathway for adults).

### **What should I do if I've used this product?**

We are especially concerned about the use of this product on babies or small children, and recommend that you immediately stop using the product and schedule your child for a blood lead test with their medical provider.

### **What should I do with this product if I have it at home? How do I safely dispose of it?**

Call or email the Multnomah County Leadline program at 503-988-4000 or [leadline@multco.us](mailto:leadline@multco.us) if you have a sample of the product.

### **Can I drop off this product with a public health agency for testing or investigation?**

Yes. Call or email the Multnomah County Leadline program at 503-988-4000 or [leadline@multco.us](mailto:leadline@multco.us) if you have a sample of the product.

### **Is there a way to test this product at home?**

The most reliable and accurate method for testing the product is through a laboratory.

### **What are agencies doing to prevent more lead exposures from this product?**

State and county health officials are working with the FDA to investigate the cases and test more products as they become available. Until the source and scope of the lead contamination are better understood, local health officials are also asking anyone selling these products to stop selling them and remove them from their websites to protect their customers. Local health officials are working with culturally specific community groups and other partners to warn residents of risks associated with the eczema cream.

### **Who should get tested for elevated blood lead levels?**

This product is intended for use on babies and small children. That is the population most vulnerable to lead exposure and we recommend blood lead testing when this product has been used within the last 3-6 months in any small child or baby.

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**What should adults who use this product do? If an adult applies the cream and doesn't wash their hands, they could also ingest lead?**

If you used or applied this product, make sure to thoroughly wash your hands before eating, cooking, etc. If you have concerns about your own exposure, talk to your health care provider about getting a blood lead test.

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