FOR PREGNANT WOMEN & PARENTS OF YOUNG CHILDREN

Keeping Little Ones Lead-Safe

After the Nov 20 Detonation — and Every Day After



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Why you, especially

Young children put hands and toys in their mouths and absorb more of the lead they swallow. Lead harms the growing brain, and the damage is usually permanent.

In pregnancy, lead passes to the baby. Your body also pulls lead stored in your bones back into your blood.

Your yard: the honest picture

By the Army's own forecast, even the heaviest dust adds **well under 1 ppm** of lead once it mixes into the top inch of soil. EPA looks into yards at **200 ppm**.

The risk is **fresh dust on top** in the first days. Over the long term, old paint near older homes is usually the bigger source.

The first week after the all-clear

- **Keep kids off bare dirt and sandboxes** until a soaking rain, or rake in fresh sand.
- **Wet-wipe what kids touch outside:** slides, swings, tables, porch rails, steps.
- Wash toys that were left outside in warm, soapy water.
- Wash pacifiers, bottles and teethers that touch the ground.
- Shoes off at the door, with a mat outside it. Wipe pets' paws.
- Hands washed before meals, snacks and naps.
- Wash and peel any garden produce.
- **Pregnant? Let someone else do the cleaning.**

How to clean: what studies show

- **Any household cleaner works**, dish soap like Dawn included. How you clean matters more than what you use.
- **Wet, never dry.** Dry sweeping, dusting and leaf blowers put lead back in the air.
- **Wet-wipe first.** In lab tests it removed about 90% of lead dust. Vacuum only with a HEPA vacuum. A regular one can blow fine dust back out.
- **Two buckets:** one for soapy water, one for rinsing. Change the rinse water often.
- Use paper towels or throwaway cloths. Fold to a clean side as you go, then bag and trash them.
- Wear gloves, and wash your hands after.

Protect from the inside

- **Regular meals and snacks.** An empty stomach absorbs more lead.
- Serve foods rich in **calcium, iron and vitamin C**: milk, yogurt, beans, lean meat, fruit.
- **Pregnant?** Ask your doctor about calcium. In a clinical trial, 1,200 mg a day lowered blood lead in pregnancy.

Know for sure: get tested

- **Blood test:** the only way to know a child's lead level. Ask your child's doctor. Pregnant? Ask your OB.
- **Soil test:** Iowa State Extension lists labs that test yard soil. Ask for a lead test.
- **Lead info line (EPA):** 1-800-424-5323

Sources: Army advisory and maps (Nov 17, 2026); EPA soil lead guidance (2024); lead-cleaning studies (2002–2012) and state health department guidance; Ettinger et al., *Environ Health Perspect* 2009.