



Florence County Health Department

501 Lake Ave PO Box 410 Florence, Wisconsin 54121 715-528-4837
A.Seibold, RN, MS Health Officer/Director



NEWS RELEASE

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Amber Kolberg
Florence County Health Department
715-528-4837
FAX 715-528-5269
akolberg@florencecountywi.gov

Childhood Lead Testing Available at the Florence County Health Department

[Florence, WI] –

Should your young child be tested for lead? The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends blood lead testing twice for each child from age 1-5. It is ideal to have the test once between the ages of 1-3 years of age and again between the ages of 3-5 years of age. Taking the lead test through a blood sample is a simple procedure which can be done at your healthcare provider's office through a finger prick and starting in January 2023, the Florence County Health Department will be offering free lead tests.

Why is it important to test for blood lead twice before five years of age? Lead poisoning in children is defined by the CDC as a blood reference value of 3.5 ug/dl or higher. Providers may take a second test through a blood draw to validate an initial high test as the blood draw is more reliable. High blood lead levels can lead to serious short- and long-term effects to a child's behavior and ability to learn including damage to the brain and nervous system and hearing and speech problems, according to the CDC.

Are you worried about the cost? Health insurances are required to cover blood lead tests through preventive visits with no out-of-pocket costs. Medicaid/Badgercare also covers both tests for young children.

To schedule a lead test for your children under 5 years of age, call Sara at 715-528-4837. For more information, go to the Health Department webpage at <http://www.florencewipublichealth.com/>. The Florence County Health Department is located on the first floor of the courthouse. The department is open 8:00-4:30pm Monday through Thursday. Need health insurance? Visit access.wi.gov to see if you qualify for benefits.

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