

## **CDC ISSUES NEW LEAD SCREENING GUIDELINES FOR PREGNANT AND LACTATING WOMEN**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released *Guidelines for the Identification and Management of Lead Exposure in Pregnant and Lactating Women* in 2010.

Bone lead stores are mobilized in pregnancy and during lactation for women with prior lead exposure and pass through the placenta and into breast milk. The CDC Advisory Committee cites compelling research evidence that prenatal lead exposure impairs neurodevelopment, placing children at increased risk for developmental delay, reduced IQ, and behavioral problems.

A summary of the new CDC Guidelines:

- Routine blood lead testing of pregnant women is recommended in clinical settings that serve particular subgroups of women at increased risk for exposure, including those:
  - Working in occupations that use lead;
  - Recently immigrated;
  - Living in older homes being renovated
  - Eating or storing food in traditional glazed pottery;
  - Consuming imported foods, such as Mexican candies, Chapulines, imported spices;
  - Using alternative remedies or cosmetics; or
  - Engaging in high-risk hobbies (stained glass, ceramics)
- If community-specific risk factors have not been identified, pregnant women should be assessed for lead exposure, using risk-factor questionnaires or blood lead testing, at the earliest contact with their physicians. A blood lead test should be performed if a single risk factor is identified at any point during pregnancy
- Follow-up interventions should begin at maternal blood lead levels  $\geq 5\text{mcg/dL}$ 
  - Provide guidance regarding sources of lead and help identify potential sources in the patient's environment.
  - Pregnant women with blood lead concentrations  $\geq 10\text{mcg/dL}$  should be removed from occupational lead exposure.
  - Source identification for BLLs  $\geq 15\text{ mcg/dL}$  should be conducted in collaboration with the local health department.
  - Chelation therapy may be warranted where the maternal blood lead exceeds 45 mcg/dL and in consultation with an expert in lead poisoning.
  - Newborns exposed to lead in utero should receive blood lead testing according to the schedule outlined in the CDC Guidelines.
  - Breastfeeding should continue unless maternal blood lead levels exceed 40 mcg/dL.

The entire CDC *Guidelines* document can be viewed at:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/publications/leadandpregnancy2010.pdf>

Please see the attached prenatal lead risk questionnaire that is available to pilot with your patients;  
For information about using the tool email the Coalition: [www.getleadout.org](http://www.getleadout.org)