

# ARE YOUR DISHES LEAD-FREE?

*Even low levels of lead in the blood can cause serious health problems and hurt a child's ability to learn, pay attention, and succeed in school.*

**Lead can be found in glazes and decorations covering the surface of some plates, bowls, mugs, and glasses.**

If these dishes are used to prepare, store, or serve food and drinks, your family may be exposed to lead. The amount of lead that is released from a dish depends on where the lead is located, how much lead is used, the condition of each item, how the dishes are used, the type of food served, and how long food remains in the dish. Most common dishware in use does not pose a lead hazard, BUT...



## DISHES MAY NOT BE SAFE IF THEY ARE...

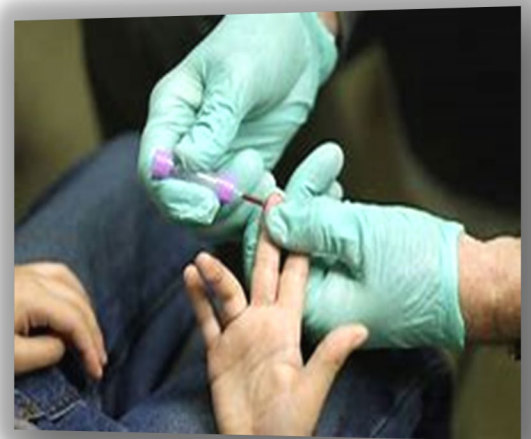
- Passed down from family like antiques, fine china, leaded crystal, or traditional Asian dishes.
- Bought at thrift stores, flea markets, garage sales, street vendors, or outside the USA.
- Damaged with worn eating surfaces, chips, scratches, or a corroded glaze (chalky residue)
- Brightly colored or have decorations that touch food, liquids, or your mouth.
- Rough with raised decorations on the eating surface that you can feel with your hand.
- Traditional glazed terra cotta, homemade, handmade, or irregular in shape,
- Labeled as *Not for Food Use* or *CA Prop 65*.

### Examples of dishes that may contain lead:



# THINGS YOU CAN DO TODAY!

- Purchase lead-free dishes** from well-known stores that are labeled for sale in the US. Lead is rarely found in new, plain white dishes.
- Call or email the company that made or sold your dishes.** Ask if they are lead-free.
- Check the label.** Lead-Safe means the item will not leach out lead unless the glaze is defective or the item is damaged. Lead-Free means the items contains little to no lead.
- If you think your dishes may have lead,** do not use them for heating, storing, or serving food and drink, especially acidic foods like tomatoes, soy sauce, fruit juices, and soda. These types of foods will increase the amount of lead released from the dish.
- Testing your dishes for lead is difficult.** You can test your dishes for lead by using a lead test kit from your local hardware store, but most of these kits are not recognized by the EPA for accuracy. If you think your dishes may have lead in them, keep them for decoration, but don't use them for eating or drinking.
- Get your child tested for lead!** The only way to know if your child has been exposed to lead is by a blood lead test. Have your child's doctor test them for lead at **1** and **2** years of age.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Hawaii State Department of Health

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