



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
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December 15, 2023

**MEDICAL ADVISORY: LEAD POISONING OUTBREAK LINKED TO  
CINNAMON APPLESAUCE POUCHES**

- Multiple states have reported cases of lead poisoning related to eating WanaBana, Schnucks and Weis cinnamon applesauce pouches.
- A DOH investigation revealed that the products of concern were not sold at retail locations in Hawaii, however children may have eaten the applesauce during travel to the US mainland or via product brought to Hawaii.
- Consider lead screening for any patients that ate WanaBana, Schnucks or Weis cinnamon applesauce products.
- DOH's Hawaii Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (HI-CLPPP) and Disease Outbreak Control Division are expanding monitoring activities to identify cases and support providers and families.

Dear Healthcare Provider:

The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to identify cases of lead poisoning linked to lead contamination of cinnamon applesauce pouches. As of December 5, 2023, more than 60 cases of lead poisoning in 27 states have been connected to consumption of WanaBana, Schnucks and Weis cinnamon applesauce products. As of December 13, no cases of lead poisoning linked to applesauce have been identified in Hawaii.

At this time, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is investigating cinnamon in the fruit pouches as a potential source of the lead. Implicated products have been [recalled](#).

An investigation by DOH's Food and Drug Branch revealed that the contaminated products were not sold in retail stores in Hawaii. However, keiki may have eaten the cinnamon applesauce products while traveling to the US mainland or if the product was brought to Hawaii.

To ensure our keiki remain healthy and safe, healthcare providers should:

- Review intake of cinnamon applesauce and counsel patients or their caregivers not to eat the affected cinnamon-containing apple purée or applesauce products. Families should discard any of the implicated products.
- Conduct lead screening for any children who ate the recalled cinnamon applesauce products.
- Consider lead exposure in the differential diagnosis of patients presenting with clinical findings associated with lead poisoning, which may include the following:
  - Constitutional symptoms such as generalized weakness, fatigue, malaise, arthralgias, myalgias, irritability, anorexia, insomnia, and weight loss.
  - Abdominal pain (“lead colic”), constipation, nausea, and other gastrointestinal symptoms.
  - Anemia (normochromic or microcytic, possibly with basophilic stippling).
  - Central nervous system effects, such as headache, impaired visual-motor coordination, tremor, and, in severe cases, seizure, encephalopathy, and coma.
  - Stunted growth, hearing problems, impaired neurobehavioral development, decreased intelligence, and failure to meet expected developmental milestones.
  - Impaired kidney function, such as acute tubular dysfunction.

Of note: most children with lead poisoning are asymptomatic at the time of exposure so a lack of these signs or symptoms does not rule out lead poisoning.
- Lead Screening can be done with capillary lead testing (lab or point of care) followed by venous confirmation if capillary test detects lead over 3.5 ug/dL.
- **Any blood lead tests above 3.5 ug/dL, associated with cinnamon applesauce should be reported to the Hawaii Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (HI-CLPPP) at 808-733-9012.**

For more information on childhood lead poisoning and the lead poisoning outbreak linked to cinnamon applesauce pouches, please visit the following online resources:

- [CDC Advisory](#)
- [FDA Investigation Information](#)
- [HI-CLPPP](#)

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter and for partnering with us to ensure a safe and healthy community. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Hawaii Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (HI-CLPPP) at 808-733-9012.

Sincerely,



Sarah Kemble, MD

State Epidemiologist

Chief, DOH Disease Outbreak & Control Division