Where Lead Hides in Our Homes

Let's take a gentle look at the specific places that might be adding lead to our water. Most of the common sources are actually inside or very close to our homes. These include lead pipes, brass faucets, and plumbing fixtures.

In many homes—especially those built before 1978—pipes were joined using something called lead solder. Even if your home doesn't have a lead service line (the pipe that connects your house to the street), your faucets themselves — even the shiny chrome ones — may have brass parts inside that contain lead.

It can feel a little overwhelming to think about the hidden parts of our homes, but knowing the age of your plumbing helps point us in the right direction and lets us know where to start looking.
What would make it easier for your family to take a look and check on it?

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How Lead Gets Into the Water

You might be wondering how the metal actually makes its way into the water. This happens through a natural process where **pipes and faucets slowly wear down over time**. When water sits in pipes made with lead, or flows through brass fixtures, small amounts of the metal can seep into the water. This is more likely to happen if the water's chemistry isn't perfectly balanced to protect the pipes.

If you use a **private well**, older parts like "packer" elements or submersible pumps can also break down and release lead. We don't always know exactly when this is happening because it takes place inside the pipes, but understanding that the metal wears down over time helps us see why regular testing is so important.

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Why Results Can Be Different

It's easy to think that if there's a factory nearby, our water must have lead in it — but that's usually not how it works. Lead mostly comes from our own pipes and faucets, so your neighbor's water can be quite different from yours.

Even within your own home, **lead levels can change a lot from one day to the next.** The data show that while the average amount of lead across an entire city might look low, individual homes can have short "spikes" when lead levels rise to much higher numbers for a brief time.

This kind of uncertainty is normal, even if it feels frustrating. It simply means that one single test result from **one home can't tell the whole story for everyone.**

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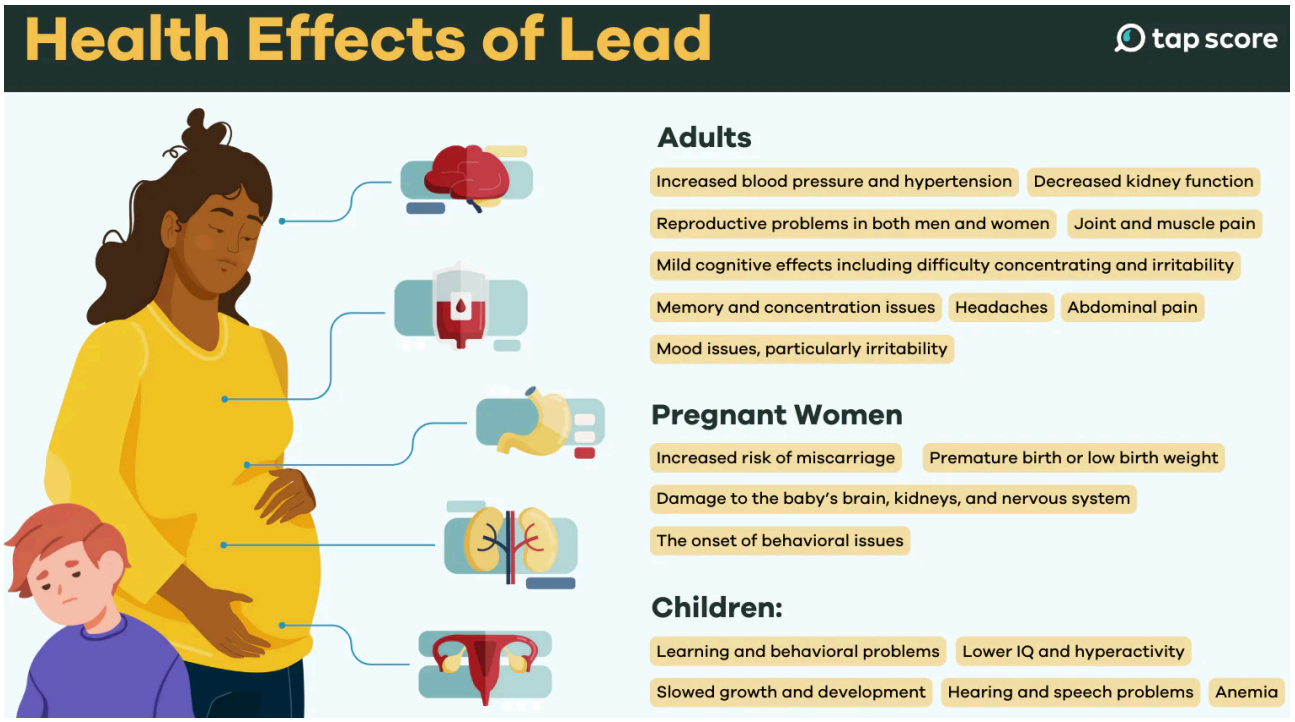
Protecting the Most Vulnerable

Because lead levels can rise unexpectedly, it's especially important to think about who is most vulnerable. Families with young children or people who are pregnant need to be extra careful.



Health experts tell us that there is **no safe level of lead** in a child's blood. Lead can harm developing brains and can affect the health of a pregnancy. Even if community results show that average lead levels are low, those occasional high "spikes" can still pose a risk for our little ones.

We're not sharing this to scare you — only to help you make the best, most caring decisions for your family.

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Simple Steps We Can Take Together Right Now

Here's the good news: there are some simple things we can do starting today. Because you can't see, taste, or smell lead, the only sure way to know is to **have your water tested**. You can check your water bill to see if you're on a public system, or ask your local health department if you use a private well.

While you're figuring that out, you can protect your family right away. Use a certified filter for drinking and cooking. Also, use only cold tap water for cooking, since hot water dissolves lead more quickly. We may not have all the answers about your pipes just yet, but these steps really do help reduce exposure.

Just by asking these questions, you're already taking such good care of your home and your family.