



Fall 2019

# Regional Lead Poisoning Prevention News

## Lead Levels in the Children of Chemung County Are Among the Highest in New York State

Each year between 2013 -2017, 1600 to 1900 lead tests were performed on children in Chemung County. In each of these years, greater than 10% of those tests were elevated above or equal to 5 ug/dl. These levels remain consistently elevated year after year. In 2013 through 2015, the rate per 1,000 tested children less than 6 years of age with confirmed lead levels greater than 10ug/dl in Chemung County was 21.2 (NYS rate = 5.1).

In 2015, all of the referrals from a 9 county region that were made to Golisano Children's Hospital in Rochester for chelation came from the city of Elmira. Chelation is the recommended treatment only for those children with lead levels greater than 45 ug/dl. This alarming rate of lead poisoning in the children of Chemung County prompted a visit to the Chemung County Board of Health in July 2017 by Dr. Stanley Schaffer, a nationally-known expert on lead poisoning and director of the Western New York Lead Poisoning Resource Center in Rochester NY.

Chemung County Health Dept. offers free lead testing 6 months to 18 years old by appointment only. Call 607-737-2899.

Find us on the web:

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### Our Vision is

To Eliminate Lead Poisoning in the Finger Lakes Region

### Our Mission is

To increase awareness, and promote the prevention and early detection of lead poisoning in our communities.



## What's on my dishes?



Astonishingly, a lot of our plates and dishes we use every day contain lead or cadmium. Did you ever stop to think that those plates with the pretty and colorful designs on them or your

grandmother's expensive antique china could leach a lot of lead or cadmium during meals where food is being served in them? WTHR, Indianapolis News did the investigation of lead in plates, bowls and mugs. One out ten dishes they tested contained more than 10,000 ppm of lead and several of them had 100,000 ppm (levels in the 90 ppm range or below are considered lead-safe although it is still not lead-free). So eating out of these dishes for a long period of time can cause lead to accumulate in the body and can actually cause lead poisoning.

Why is it there in the first place? Lead is often used in the glazes and or decorations on the surface of dishes to make the dishes more durable and to make colored glazes bright and shiny. Cadmium is used to give dishes bright colors such as bright yellow or orange color to glazes. There is also a high chance that ceramic, porcelain, china or bone china will contain lead or cadmium since they all use glaze and often lead and cadmium are used in the glaze. Lead and cadmium are easily found in vintage china, Mexican terra cotta, decorated Asian plates, handcrafted or brightly colored dinnerware or dinnerware with decals on the surface.

These dishes with lead or cadmium in them can leach lead or cadmium while food is served in them. They will leach more and faster if acidic food is being served. Food items such as soy sauce, apples, citrus fruits, tomatoes, pasta dishes with tomato sauce and salad dressing are considered to be acidic enough to cause the leaching process. If a dish has a chip in it or the glaze on it is worn out due to frequent washing, it will leach more as well. Microwaving food in the dishes that may contain lead will also accelerate leaching of the lead.

So your question might be, "Which pretty/colorful/patterned dishes are Lead-free?" Unfortunately the more decorative they are the more likely they are to contain lead and/or cadmium. The thought process behind choosing your plates and dishes should be to rely on your food to decorate your table, *not* your dishes.

Here is a list of some XRF tested dinnerware that was found to not contain lead or cadmium (testing done by Tamara Rubin, the founder of the Lead Safe America Foundation): Corelle Livingware Winter Frost White Glass Dinner Set • Corelle Winter Frost White Dinnerware Set with Storage Lids • Corelle Embossed Bella Faenza 16 Piece Dinnerware Set • Lenox Opal Innocence Platinum-Banded Bone China • Sur La Table Bistro 24-Piece Dinnerware Set • Libbey Crisa Moderno Dinner Plate • Anchor Hocking 8-Inch Presence Glass Salad Plate, Set of 12 • Duralex Lys 8 Inch Clear Calotte Plate

The Finger Lakes Coalition to Stop Lead Poisoning began in 2011 with the leadership of Ontario County Public Health Nurse Barbara Roszak, R.N., M.P.H.

Its **VISION** is to eliminate lead poisoning in the Finger Lakes Region of New York, and it is primarily focused on eight counties: Chemung, Livingston, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, and Yates.

Coalition membership is open to all individuals and agencies in the region who understand and support the **MISSION**, which is to increase awareness, and promote the prevention and early detection of lead poisoning in our communities.

## “The Perfect Predator” Partners in Production

New York State Department of Health  
Oneida County Health Department  
Cornell Cooperative Extension Oneida  
Tompkins County Health Department  
Steuben County Health Department  
Excellus Blue Cross Blue Shield

The Perfect Predator is a documentary that touches on one aspect of lead poisoning that often gets overlooked – the harsh reality and far-reaching effects of this disease on all of us.

When children have lead poisoning, entire families, and in turn entire communities, suffer the effects of lead poisoning.

Watch the video here:

<https://www.steubencony.org/pages.asp?PID=707>

Or search **lead poisoning the perfect predator** on Youtube

Picture credit: <https://ocgov.net/oneida/health>

## Gun Marksmanship and Youth Lead Exposure

National pediatric environmental health experts have recently highlighted cases of elevated blood lead levels in adolescents who were involved in indoor target shooting. These teens were competitive shooters, and the ranges they frequented had lead hazards. Risk at indoor ranges is higher due to the confined space, however outdoor shooting also involves risk of lead exposure. In our Finger Lakes region there are many shooting ranges, and several have youth or junior rifle programs

([www.wheretoshoot.org](http://www.wheretoshoot.org)). Everyone involved in these activities will benefit by understanding primary prevention and hygiene measures for youth actively engaging in marksmanship. Parents and pediatricians can ensure blood lead levels are done as needed. Range owners can refer to this

National Shooting Sports Foundation document which provides comprehensive guidance to reduce risk of lead exposure: [Lead Management and OSHA Compliance for Indoor Shooting Ranges - www.usashooting.org/library/Youth\\_Development/HS\\_and\\_College\\_Programs/Lead\\_Management\\_-\\_NSSF.pdf](http://www.usashooting.org/library/Youth_Development/HS_and_College_Programs/Lead_Management_-_NSSF.pdf)



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Have questions or want to join our coalition?  
Contact your County Lead Coordinator

Chemung County  
(607) 737-2028

Livingston County  
(585) 243-7299

Ontario County  
(585) 396-4343

Schuyler County  
(607) 535-8140

Seneca County  
(315) 539-1920

Steuben County  
(607) 664-2438

Wayne County  
(315) 946-5749

Yates County  
(315) 536-5160