
Evaluation of lead level in breast milk and fresh milk and its effect on blood lead level in infants

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Lead is one of the oldest recognized environmental pollutant and human toxin. It serves no known useful purpose in the body. Throughout life humans accumulate lead in their bodies based on their exposure. Sources of lead are multiple, but they are difficult to appraise. In addition to the natural occurrence of lead in rocks, soil, water, air and plants, lead is also produced artificially. Artificial sources include : industry, paints, gasoline, toys, shots, bullets, leaded jewelry, improperly glazed earthenware, facial cosmetics and inks used in typing. Also lead was found in every food item. Children absorb 40-50% of dietary lead compared to 5-10% absorbed by adults. Furthermore, children are exposed to a special hazard from environmental sources due their mouthing activity. Signs and symptoms of lead toxicity depend on the lead level and age but more subtle effects apparently occur in both age groups at a lower level than previously recognized. These vague manifestations includes : irritability, moodiness, loss interest in leisure time activities, frequent absence from school, anorexia and occasional vomiting. A silent epidemic as been observed among children exposed to environmental lead where the impact was in the form of lead gastrointestinal tract disorders and renal troubles.