

ATSDR Blood Lead Testing in Iola, Kansas



Who are we?

- The Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry (ATSDR) – a public health agency which is affiliated with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- Local office in the Kansas City area.

Why did ATSDR test blood in Iola?

- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) tested soil for lead in all the yards in Iola and found that the soil has high lead levels from former smelter operations.
- People may have contact with lead in the soil, especially children who play outdoors or in the dirt.
- Testing can identify young children and pregnant women whose blood lead levels are high enough to require follow-up with a doctor.
- Results were provided to EPA to help them decide which homes to clean up right away.

During and After Soil Removal*



*Photos courtesy of ATSDR Region 7 and EPA Region 7

ATSDR tested levels of lead in blood in Iola, KS in December 2016 and August 2017. Testing was done for those most sensitive to the effects of lead:

- children - younger than 6 years old (older children were tested too)
- pregnant women or women who may become pregnant

Children with blood lead levels (BLL) greater than or equal to 5 micrograms per deciliter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$) were recommended for follow up since there is no safe level of lead in blood in children.



How do high lead levels harm health?

In children under 6 years of age, high lead levels can cause problems with:

- Paying attention
- Learning
- School performance
- Behavior
- Lowering IQ

Pregnant women with high blood lead levels may give birth to babies with:

- Lower birth weight
- Slower growth after birth



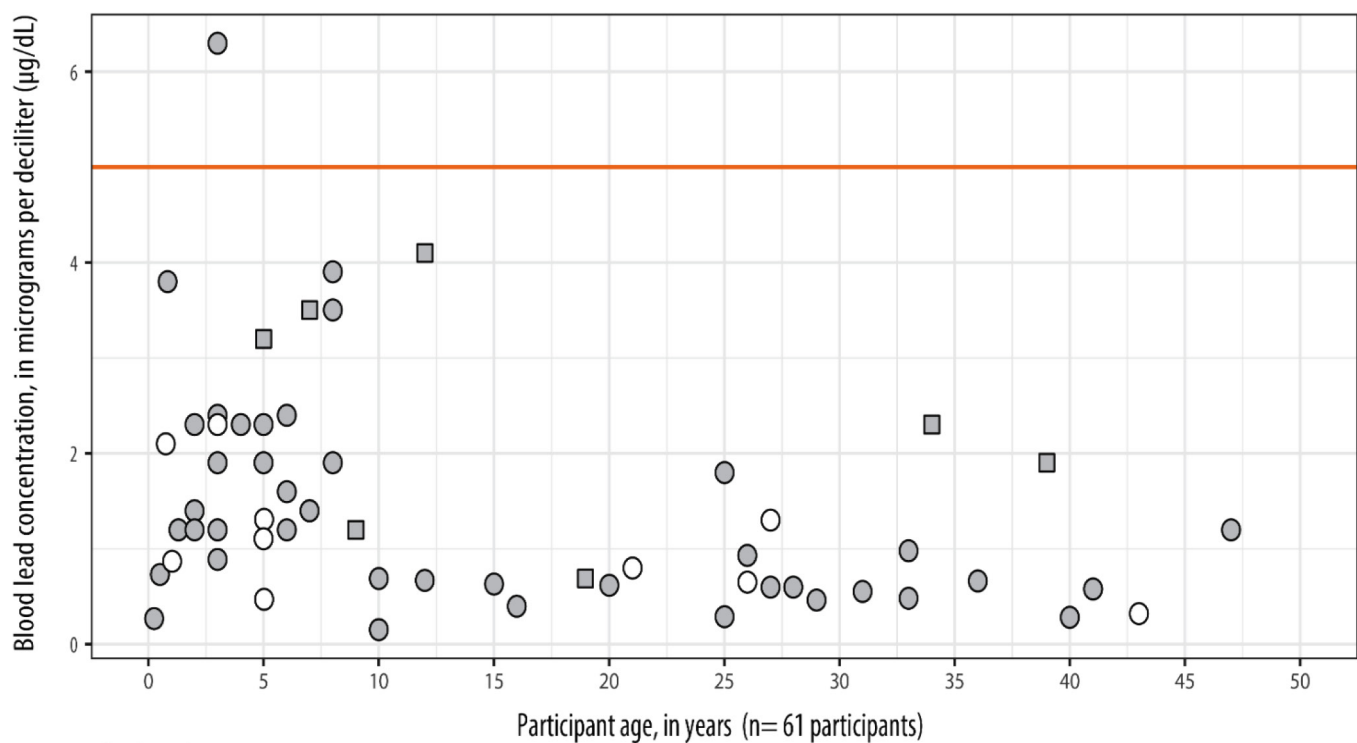
**U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services**
Agency for Toxic Substances
and Disease Registry

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What were the results of the blood lead testing?

- One child tested in August 2017 had a blood lead level above 5 µg/dL. Parents were notified and retesting was recommended.
- No pregnant women or women of childbearing age had blood lead levels equal to or above 5 µg/dL.
- Children tested in Iola generally had higher BLLs than the general U.S. population, and children's BLLs were higher than the tested adults.
- All participants were provided with a letter with their blood lead results as well as recommendations on how to reduce exposure to lead.
- An Exposure Investigation (EI) report was released in August, 2018 and is available at the Iola library and on the ATSDR website (<https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/publications.html>).

Blood Lead Concentrations vs Age of Iola EI Participants



Explanation

Sample event

- Inside the city limits, December 2016
- Inside the city limits, August 2017
- Outside the city limits, August 2017

— ATSDR Exposure Investigation follow-up level (5 micrograms per deciliter)

Who do I contact for more information?

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