



Procedure: Assessment For Blood Lead Screening For Children

Volume: Nutrition Services/Breastfeeding

Section: Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment

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Purpose

To provide guidance on appropriate screening for, referrals to, and documentation of elevated blood lead levels in children.

Blood Lead Screening Requirement

Federal Regulations require that during a certification visit for a child, the parent or responsible party must be asked if the child has had a blood lead screening test.

- A blood lead screening test involves obtaining a blood sample to test for elevated blood lead levels.
- Being asked questions regarding the child's lead exposure risk (such as if the child lives in a house built before 1950, etc) is not the same as a screening test.

If a child has not had a test, they must be referred to programs where they can obtain a test

Assessment For Blood Lead Screening Test

As part of the nutrition risk assessment, a question has been added to risk criteria 2L:

- for children ages 12-35 months, ask if a blood lead screening test has been performed in the last 12 months
- for children ages 36-72 months, ask if a blood lead screening test has ever been performed

If a test has been performed, circle Y

- If blood lead levels are greater than or equal to 10 ug/DL, assign the risk code 2L, and offer appropriate nutrition education

If a test has not been performed, circle N

- Refer the child to their primary care physician to obtain a test, document the referral in the WIC Computer System, and offer appropriate nutrition education.

Blood Lead Screening For Medicaid Participants

Current Federal law requires that all children enrolled in Medicaid be screened for lead at age 12 months and 24 months (or through 72 months if the child has not been previously screened) as part of Medicaid's early and periodic screening, diagnosis and treatment (EPSDT) requirement.

WIC Allowable Costs

WIC nutrition services and administration (NSA) funds are not allowed to be used to conduct blood lead screening tests.

A hematological test for anemia, such as hemoglobin, is the only laboratory test required to determine a person's eligibility for WIC, and is the only laboratory cost that is an allowed cost.

For further clarification of WIC allowable costs related to blood lead screening tests contact the State WIC Administrative Operations Coordinator.

It is not our intent to have WIC Local Agencies perform the blood lead test.

Nutrition Education

If a participant has been found to have elevated blood lead levels, appropriate nutrition education could include:

- Referring the participant to lead treatment programs
- Emphasizing the use of foods high in iron and calcium which help to alleviate the effects of elevated blood lead levels
- Assisting in developing an appropriate plan for nutrition intervention, in coordination with the healthcare provider
- Providing information on how to reduce exposure to lead

For participants who have not had a blood lead screening test, or do not have elevated blood lead levels, provide information about lead poisoning prevention.
