



Lead Level Screening

Lead can do great harm, especially to young children. Childhood lead poisoning at low levels can make learning difficult, interfere with growth, harm hearing, and delay development. At high levels, lead can cause coma, convulsions, and even death.

The main source of lead poisoning is lead dust from lead-based paint, which was used in many homes until 1978. Young children are exposed to lead dust in older homes through normal everyday activities such as crawling on the floor and putting their hands, toys, or other objects in their mouths. Lead can also be found in bare soil, some imported spices, home remedies, and cosmetics.¹

Lead level screening

The incidence of asymptomatic undue lead absorption in children 6 months to 6 years old is much higher than generally anticipated. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) have stringent requirements for lead toxicity screening for all Medicaid-eligible children.

- All Medicaid-eligible children are considered at risk for lead toxicity and **must** receive blood lead level screening tests for lead poisoning.
- Primary care practitioners (PCPs) are **required (regardless of responses to the lead screening questions)** to ensure that children be screened for lead toxicity from **9 months to 18 months old and again from 2 years to 6 years old.**
- Risk questions should be asked at every visit thereafter.

See Pennsylvania’s Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) Program Periodicity Schedule and Coding Matrix at www.amerihealthcaritaspa.com → **Providers** → **Resources** → **EPSDT**.

The Plan recommends, although not indicated on the periodicity schedule, that lead screens be done at 9 months old and again before the second birthday, and that risk questions be asked at every visit thereafter.

As an added incentive to help PCPs comply with these standards, the Plan will reimburse PCPs for blood lead screening services if they are performed in the PCP’s office.

Submit claim(s) with the following CPT codes for these services:

Billable service	CPT code	Modifier	Fee
Lead screening	83655	90	\$10 ²

Note: This service is covered only when the aforementioned CMS/DHS guidelines are followed. Elevated initial blood lead results obtained on capillary screening specimens are presumptive and should be confirmed using a venous specimen.

Our representatives are available to you for any questions regarding this problem, its screening details, its diagnosis, or its follow-up by calling the EPSDT Outreach program at:

AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania
1-855-300-8334, fax 1-866-208-8145.

Providers who participate in our Plan have a responsibility to communicate with agencies including, but not limited to, local public health agencies regarding cases involving children with lead poisoning.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health provides a toll-free Lead Information Line (**1-800-440-5323**) for questions and also provides electronic materials on lead poisoning and other environmental hazards. You can visit their website at [www.health.pa.gov/My Health/Infant and Children/Lead Poisoning](http://www.health.pa.gov/MyHealth/InfantandChildren/LeadPoisoning).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also have resources at www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead.

¹ “Lead Poisoning,” Pennsylvania Department of Health, available at www.health.pa.gov.

² \$10 must be billed on the claim in order to be reimbursed the full amount. Billing lesser amounts will result in lesser or zero reimbursement.

Lead Level Screening

Elevated blood lead level care management

An initial care management outreach call will be made for members with an EBLL 3.5 µg/dL and above, according to these steps:

- Lead Care Manager nurse will outreach to parent/guardian and lead care management services will be offered.
- Care Manager will complete lead assessment with the member's parent/guardian.
- Care Manager will develop a plan of care with member's parent/guardian.
- Care Manager will discuss Environmental Lead Investigation (ELI) with member's parent/guardian.
- A referral will be made to Early Intervention (EI) if not already completed.
- Care Manager will discuss follow-up blood lead level testing with member's parent/guardian.
- Care Manager will provide community resources and educational materials.
- Community Health Navigators will be used to locate the family and identify alternate contact information should initial outreach attempts be unsuccessful. If continued contact attempts are unsuccessful, our lead Care Manager will work with providers to ascertain compliance and assist with coordination.

An initial care management outreach call will also be made to the member's PCP to:

- Discuss the member's case.
- Verify the most recent lead level.
- Make appointment(s) for follow-up blood level testing.
- Make appointment for ELI if needed.

Ongoing care management includes:

- Scheduled follow-up with the member's parent/guardian and the PCP's office. Frequency is determined by the needs of the family and the blood lead level.
- Follow-up on referrals (EI, ELI), community resources, and educational material.
- Update of the plan of care, as needed.
- Follow-up on repeat blood lead level testing.

Care Manager will continue to follow up with the member and PCP for at least six months after a blood level drops below 3.5 µg/dL.

ELI process

AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania has contracted with Accredited Environmental Technologies (AET) and UPMC Pinnacle to provide ELI services to our members. A referral for these services can be made for any member with an EBLL 3.5 µg/dL and above.

To refer a member for an ELI through AET:

1. Complete the AET form found on our websites at www.amerihealthcaritaspa.com → **Providers** → **Resources** → **EPSDT** → **EPSDT Forms and Administration** → **Elevated Lead Investigation Referral Form**.
2. Fax the form to AET at **1-610-891-0559**.
3. AET will complete the ELI.

For any questions about the AET form or investigation process, please call AET at **1-800-969-6238**.

To refer a member for an ELI through UPMC Pinnacle (Dauphin and Lancaster counties only):

1. Call **1-717-782-6443** or **1-717-782-4608**.
2. Fax **1-717-782-2709**.
3. Email lead@pinnaclehealth.org

For our members with elevated blood lead levels, health care practitioners can make direct referrals to our Care Management team by calling our **Special Needs Unit** at: AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania (**1-800-684-5503**).

You can also "let us know" by faxing the Let Us Know referral form to our Care Management team at **1-866-208-8145**.

For more information on the Let Us Know program, go to:

www.amerihealthcaritaspa.com/provider/initiatives/let-us-know/index.aspx.

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