Lead Poison Is Found in Preschoolers

COLUMBUS (AP) — Tests on 417 preschool children in Columbus' inner city showed 21 have had lead poisoning and about 83 have abnormal amounts of lead in their bloodstream, an Ohio State University researcher said yesterday.

Dr. A. Harold Lubin, research associate in the OSU Department of Pediatrics, said that lead-based paint, which is found in many older homes, is believed to be the source of the poison.

HE SAID 5% of the children will require treatment for toxic levels of lead and 20% will be checked from time to time to assure that the abnormal levels of lead do not increase, he said.

Four OSU medical students and a public health nurse teamed with a volunteer to visit more than 1,500 homes in the inner city during April and May, Lubin said.

The study is a joint project of the OSU College of Medicine and Children's Hospital here.

The Ohio Department of Mental Hygiene announced yesterday a $53,600 grant to the Cleveland Psychiatric Institute to determine the amount of lead in the teeth of children in the inner city and suburban areas of Cleveland and from mentally retarded children in state institutions.

Baby or deciduous teeth will be collected and analyzed by researchers.

If an abnormal amount of lead is found in the teeth after they are checked, the institute will notify authorities so that the youngsters can begin an immediate therapy program.

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