

11/14/23

Health Advisory: High Blood Lead Levels in Children Consuming Recalled Cinnamon Applesauce Pouches

Actions Requested:

- 1) Counsel patients or their caregivers and guardians not to eat specific cinnamon-containing apple purée or applesauce products named in the FDA recall announcements including WanaBana Apple Cinnamon Fruit Purée Pouches. The FDA recall announcement can be found here: [WanaBana Recalls WanaBana, Weis, and Schnucks Apple Cinnamon Fruit Purée Pouches & Cinnamon Apple Sauce Due to Elevated Lead Levels | FDA](#)
- 2) Educate patients or their caregivers and guardians about the health effects of lead exposure in children and the importance of seeking medical care. Most children have no obvious symptoms, but appropriate screening can detect lead in blood. Children who have consumed a recalled applesauce pouch product should be tested for lead exposure. Clinicians may refer to CDC's guidance on testing children for lead exposure. The American Academy of Pediatrics has also published clinical guidance for managing lead exposure in children. More specific recommendations for obtaining Blood Lead Levels (BLLs) in your jurisdiction may be available from your local health department or regional Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit (PEHSU).
- 3) Consider lead exposure in the differential diagnosis of patients presenting with compatible clinical findings associated with lead poisoning, which may include the following:
 - a) Constitutional symptoms such as generalized weakness, fatigue, malaise, arthralgias, myalgias, irritability, anorexia, insomnia, and weight loss.
 - b) Abdominal pain ("lead colic"), constipation, nausea, and other gastrointestinal symptoms.
 - c) Anemia (normochromic or microcytic, possibly with basophilic stippling).
 - d) Central nervous system effects, such as headache, impaired visual-motor coordination, tremor, and, in severe cases, seizure, encephalopathy, and coma.
 - e) Stunted growth, hearing problems, impaired neurobehavioral development, decreased intelligence, and failure to meet expected developmental milestones.
 - f) Impaired kidney function, such as acute tubular dysfunction.
- 4) Obtain a detailed exposure history in patients with suspected lead exposure, including those who consumed a recalled product. Also, ask about household members with known lead exposures and possible lead sources in and around the home.

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Parents and caregivers who work in jobs, hobbies, or other activities that expose them to lead can bring lead-containing dust home with them. Lead-containing dust can be tracked onto carpets, floors, furniture, and other surfaces that a child may touch, and expose other family members without knowing. Known risk-factors for lead exposure include the following:

- a) Lead paint and dust in homes built before 1978.
 - b) Lead in soil, for example due to prior contamination from leaded gasoline, exterior lead paint, or old home renovations.
 - c) Nearby active lead and other types of smelters, battery recycling plants, or other industries that release lead into the air,
 - d) Certain folk remedies (e.g. Ayurvedic or traditional Chinese herbal medicines, Azarcon, Greta), cosmetics (e.g. kohl, kajal, surma), religious powders (e.g. sindoor), and other cultural products.
 - e) Imported powdered spices, such as turmeric, chili, and curry powders.
 - f) Certain types of jewelry made with lead-containing metal alloys or paints.
 - g) Ceramics made with lead-containing glazes.
 - h) Older toys made with lead-based paint, lead-containing metal alloys, or certain types of plastic.
- 5) Know that individuals with high BLLs may not be symptomatic and are identified through screening. Be familiar with Washington State Department of Health testing recommendations for lead, indications for confirmatory testing, and recommended actions based on BLL.
- 6) Obtain early consultation with or provide a referral to a medical toxicologist or pediatric specialist with expertise in managing lead exposure for medical workup and managing patients with high BLLs.
- 7) Report cases of individuals with BLLs above the reference value, including those who have consumed these recalled products to the Washington State Department of Health. Washington State guidelines differ from CDC, the guideline in Washington is that all detectable blood lead levels are reportable. BLLs 5 µg/dL or higher in youths and adults must be reported within two days. All other test results must be reported within one month.

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WA DOH reporting guidelines can be found here: <https://doh.wa.gov/public-health-healthcare-providers/healthcare-professions-and-facilities/professional-resources/blood-lead-testing/blood-lead-reporting>

Background:

FDA, CDC, and state and local partners are investigating a potential link between high BLLs and consuming certain cinnamon-containing apple purée and applesauce products. Test results indicated that some products contained extremely high levels of lead. WanaBana, Schnucks, and Weis have initiated voluntary recalls of certain lots of WanaBana brand apple cinnamon fruit purée pouches, Schnucks brand cinnamon applesauce pouches, and Weis brand cinnamon applesauce pouches. As of November 7, 2023, there are 22 cases, in states including Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Washington, ages 1 to 3 years, with BLLs ranging from 4 to 29 micrograms per deciliter ($\mu\text{g/dL}$). Cases experienced signs and symptoms including headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, change in activity level, and anemia. Products associated with this recall have been found in Thurston County.

Resources:

- CDC HAN Alert 500 High Blood Lead Levels in Children Consuming Recalled Cinnamon Applesauce Pouches (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention): <https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2023/han00500.asp>
- [Investigation of Elevated Lead Levels: Cinnamon Applesauce Pouches \(November 2023\) | FDA](#)
- [WanaBana Recalls WanaBana, Weis, and Schnucks Apple Cinnamon Fruit Purée Pouches & Cinnamon Apple Sauce Due to Elevated Lead Levels | FDA](#)
- Blood Lead Testing Information for Health Care Providers (Washington State Department of Health): <https://doh.wa.gov/public-health-healthcare-providers/healthcare-professions-and-facilities/professional-resources/blood-lead-testing>
- [Blood Lead Reporting \(Washington State Department of Health\)](#)
- [Recommendations for blood lead level testing in Washington State \(Washington State Department of Health\)](#)
- [Medical Management of Childhood Lead Exposure \(University of Washington's Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit\)](#)

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

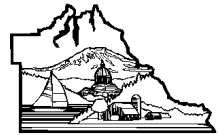
THURSTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
412 LILLY RD NE OLYMPIA, WA, 98506-5132

DISEASE REPORTING: (360)786-5470

INFORMATION: (360) 867-2500

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WWW.THURSTONCOUNTYWA.GOV/PHSS



THURSTON COUNTY
WASHINGTON

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THANK YOU FOR REPORTING

TO REPORT A NOTIFIABLE CONDITION IN THURSTON COUNTY	
Voice mail for reporting non-immediately reportable conditions (24 hours a day) : Reporting a Notifiable Condition (thurstoncountywa.gov)	Phone: 360-786-5470 Fax: 360-867-2601
Day time immediately reportable conditions - Calls are answered during business hours Monday -Friday 8am -5pm (excluding holidays) and routed to the appropriate communicable disease team member.	Phone: 360-867-2610 Secure eFax: 1-833-418-1916
After hours immediately and 24-hour reportable conditions or a public health emergency	Call 1-800-986-9050
No one is available with Thurston County Public Health and condition is immediately notifiable	1-877-539-4344

Public Health Advisories are posted online at: [Communicable Disease Updates \(thurstoncountywa.gov\)](http://thurstoncountywa.gov)