

Publications/Alerts

Imported Supplements or Remedies Found to Contain Lead, Mercury or Arsenic

Some dietary supplements, health remedies and Ayurvedic medications that may be used for a variety of health-related reasons have been found to contain dangerous chemicals or high levels of heavy metals, such as lead, mercury or arsenic. These supplements or remedies may be manufactured or handmade, available by prescription or for purchase over-the-counter in the U.S. or abroad. The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene developed this fact sheet to provide additional information on this topic.

Healthcare providers should ask patients about their use of Ayurvedic, herbal, traditional or other alternative remedies or supplements, as well as prescription and non-prescription medications. For patients who report using such products providers should consider testing for lead and other heavy metals in consultation with an expert in heavy metal poisoning or the NYC Poison Control Center (PCC).

► HEALTH ALERTS

- ***Elevated Levels of Lead, Mercury and Arsenic in Certain Ayurvedic Medications from India***
[2019 Health Advisory #14](#) (PDF)
- ***Elevated Levels of Lead and Mercury in “Emperor’s Tea Pill”***
[2016 Health Advisory #6](#) (PDF)
- ***Elevated Levels of Arsenic, Lead, and Mercury in Certain Ayurvedic Medications from India***
[2015 Health Advisory # 18](#) (PDF)
- ***Death Associated with Purported Aphrodisiac ‘Stone’ Can Cause Serious Poisoning and Death***
[2015 Health Advisory # 43](#) (PDF)

► Publications

- ***A Spoonful of Lead: A 10-Year Look at Spices as a Potential Source of Lead Exposure;***
[Journal of Public Health Management and Practice \(JPHMP\). January/February 2019](#)
- ***Declines in adult blood lead levels in New York City compared with the United States, 2004-2014;***
[Environmental Research. May 2018; 163:194-200](#)
- ***Blood Lead Levels and Potential Risk Factors for Lead Exposures Among South Asians in New York City;***
[Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health, December 2017, Volume 19, Issue 6, pp 1322–1329](#)
- ***Cardiovascular Disease & Cancer Risk Among South Asians: Impact of Sociocultural Influences on Lifestyle and Behavior;***
[Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health. August 2017](#)
- ***Intervention Model for Contaminated Consumer Products: A Multifaceted Tool for Protecting Public Health;***
[American Journal of Public Health \(AJPH\). August 2014, 104\(8\): 1377-1383](#)
- ***Lead Poisoning in Pregnant Women Who Used Ayurvedic Medications from India New York City, 2011–2012;***
[MMWR Vol 61, No 33, August 2012](#)
- [CDC Lead Publications](#)