

Lead Data Guide

June 2020 Update

The dataset described here provides data on percent venous confirmed elevated blood lead levels (EBLLs) ($\geq 5 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$) for Allegheny County children less than 6 years of age by assigned geography for 2015-2019.

Definitions:

- Percent EBLL- The number of children with a venous confirmed EBLL divided by the total number of children tested
- Assigned geography- The geographical area assigned to an individual based on the geocoded address. In this dataset the most recent and complete address for the individual was used¹.

Things to Know:

- Annual percent EBLLs are censored for areas with less than 50 children tested. These values are presented as blank with a note variable indicating them as censored.
- Areas with at least 50 children tested but have less than 10 children with an elevated result are considered unstable and should be interpreted with caution. The note variable indicates these areas for each year.
- Potential biases in those who are getting tested - Mandatory lead testing for children was implemented in Allegheny County on January 1, 2018. Children voluntarily tested for lead before this date may have received a blood test for a specific reason. This means that community data before 2018 may not be fully representative of the total population.
- Data accuracy is dependent upon laboratory reporting - The accuracy of blood test results for lead reported to the Health Department is dependent on the laboratory conducting the tests and reporting the results.
- Aggregate percentages published in June 2020 and after do not include double counting of children tested across years².
- Additional limitations include but are not limited to: misclassification of county³, exclusion of individuals who could not be assigned a geography, and possible duplicate individuals.
- Data presented here may differ from what is provided on the Allegheny County Health Department website due to continued efforts to align data processing protocols with those of the PA Department of Health. Questions regarding discrepancies should be directed to the data steward.

Examples:

1. A child had a lead test with an elevated result and the address for the test was 123 Main St, Wilkinsburg. The child then returns for a follow up test and had a change in address to 123 South Ave, Penn Hills. In this case the second address was used for geocoding and assignment of a geography for the elevated result.
2. Data published prior to June 2020: If a child was tested for lead in 2017 and 2018 within the same geography that child would count twice towards the denominator of total children tested

for that geography. Data published June 2020 and after: If a child was tested for lead in 2017 and 2018 within the same geography that child would count once towards the denominator of total children tested for that geography.

3. A child went to a doctor's office to have a lead test; however, no address was provided at the time of the test, so the office used their own zip code. In this case if the zip code the provider entered was outside of Allegheny County the test would be excluded from the dataset.

Disclaimer

"These data were compiled by the Allegheny County Health Department from the PA Electronic Disease Surveillance System maintained by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The Allegheny County Health Department and Pennsylvania Department of Health specifically disclaim responsibility for any analyses, interpretations or conclusions."