



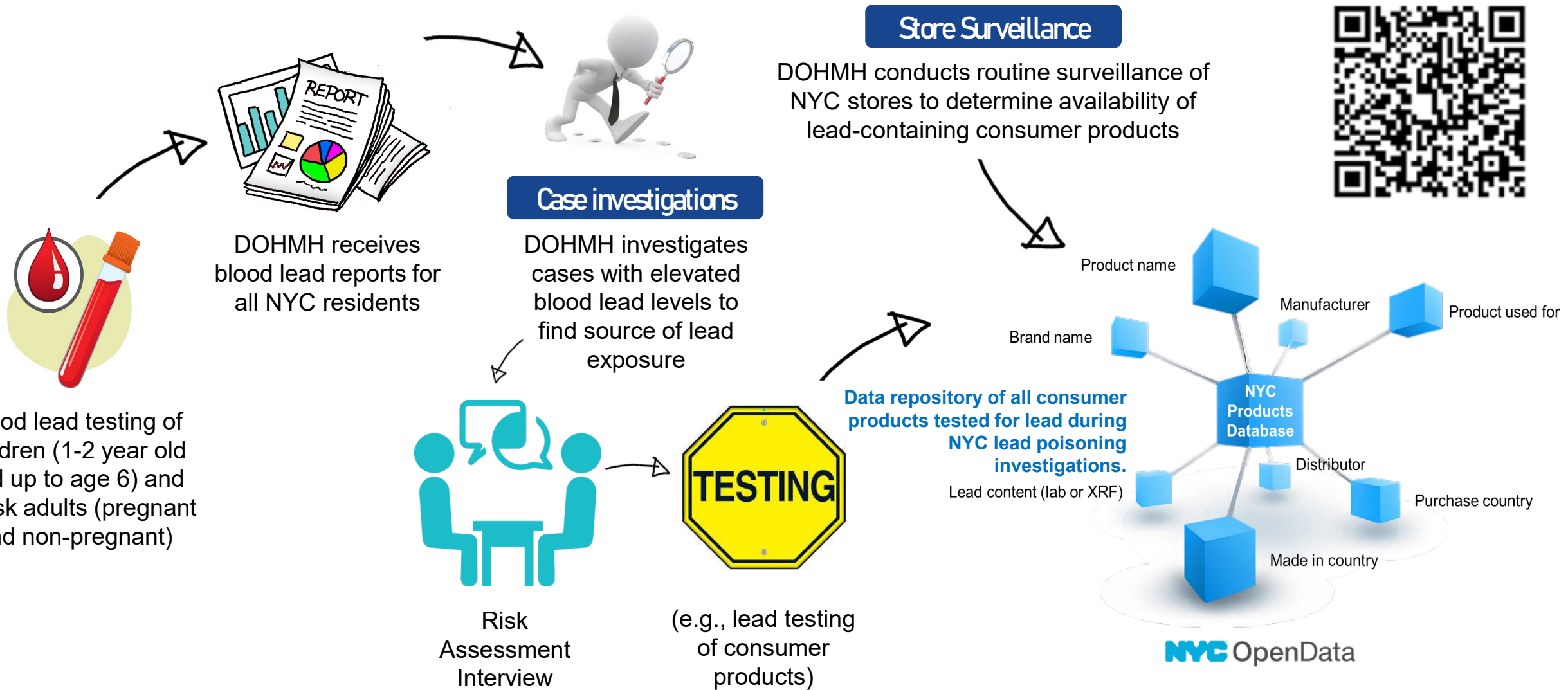
LEAD EXPOSURE THROUGH TRADITIONAL MEXICAN CERAMIC WARE

FINDINGS IN NEW YORK CITY

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How does NYC identify lead-containing consumer products?



Global Span of NYC's Investigations

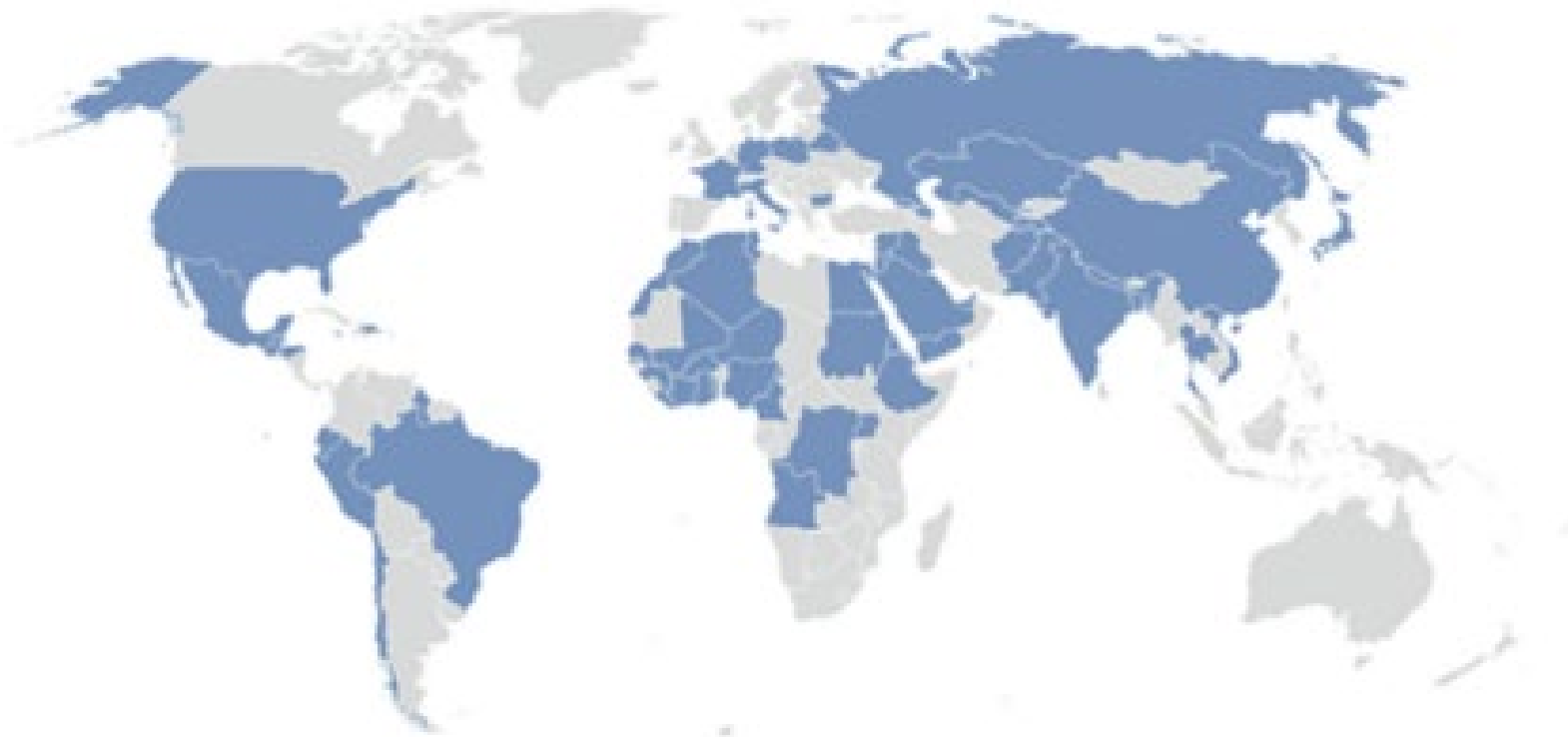


Fig. 1 Countries of purchase for products with detectable lead identified during NYC investigations, 2010-2022. Blue shading indicates countries where products with detectable lead levels were purchased, illustrating the global availability of lead-containing products.

Global Span of NYC's Investigations

Dietary Supplements & Remedies | Ayurvedic, TCM, U.S., Soviet/Mexican/West African/Dominican remedies, etc.

BLLs up to 192 µg/dL, Pb levels up to 75%, For various ailments, Hand-made or manufactured in US or abroad, Prescribed or purchased in NYC or abroad



Spices and Snacks from South Asia, Georgia, Mexico, etc.

Pb levels up to 78,000 ppm, Purchased in NYC or abroad, Made in Bangladesh, Georgia, and other countries



Cosmetics and Religious Powders from South Asia, Africa, Middle East, etc.

Pb levels ~96%, Purchased in NYC or abroad, Made in Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Morocco, and other countries



Amulets, Jewelry and Toys from South Asia, China, etc.

Pb levels ~100%, Purchased in NYC or abroad, Made in Bangladesh, India, Cambodia, Peru, China, and other countries



Ceramics

Pb levels ~99%, Purchased in NYC or abroad, Made in Mexico, Uzbekistan, and other countries



Ceramic ware



From **Ecuador**
Used for drinking
69,000 ppm
BLL 20 µg/dL



From **Uzbekistan**
Used as teacup
99,000 ppm
BLL 14 µg/dL



From **Mexico**
Used to boil water
100,000 ppm
BLL 13 µg/dL



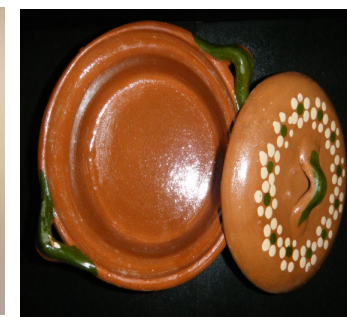
From **Turkey**
Used for food
510 ppm
BLL 15 µg/dL



From **Japan**
Used for food
56,000 ppm
BLL 13 µg/dL



From **Morocco**
Used for food/drink
94,000 ppm
BLL 30 µg/dL



Purchased in NYC
Up to 460,000 ppm
ASTM 89 µg/mL



From **Israel**
9.9 mg/cm²

Traditional Mexican Ceramic ware



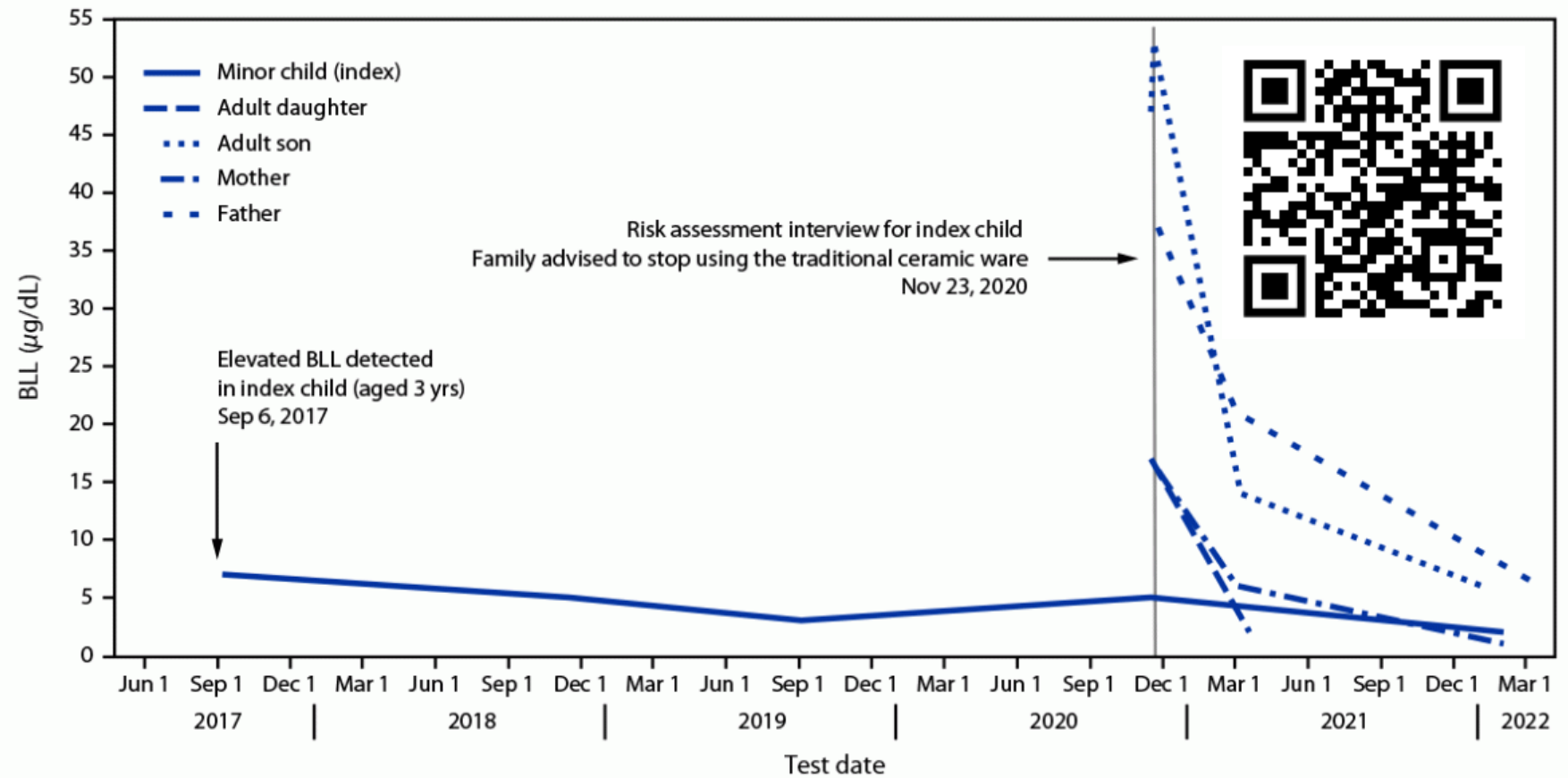
Children and pregnant individuals with Mexican ancestry are over represented among NYC lead poisoned cases:

- Risk factors include use of traditional ceramic ware from Mexico found to contain lead levels thousands of times greater than the allowable limits
- 30+ lead poisoned cases since 2017 associated with traditional ceramic ware
- Blood lead levels as high as 53 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$
- Ceramic ware hand-carried from Mexico or purchased in NYC

In November 2020, DOHMH identified a family of five with elevated blood lead levels (EBLLs) ranging from **5-53** micrograms per deciliter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$) associated with the use of a glazed, traditional ceramic ware. DOHMH intervention resulted in a significant BLL drop for the family members (**1-6** $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ at last measurement dates).

Notes from the Field: Lead Poisoning in a Family of Five Resulting from Use of Traditional Glazed Ceramic Ware — New York City, 2017–2022

FIGURE. Blood lead levels in members of a single family with exposure to traditional glazed ceramic ware — New York City, 2017–2022



Abbreviation: BLL = blood lead level.



Intervention Model for Contaminated Consumer Products

Identification of Hazardous Consumer Products

- Investigations of lead-poisoned individuals
- Poison Control Center reports
- National alerts
- Reports from other jurisdictions
- Media reports
- Published literature

Determination of Product Availability in NYC

- Check product availability in NYC stores
- Target neighborhoods based on product users
- Laboratory testing (when necessary)

Embargo and Enforcement

- Stop sale or distribution of products
- Seize and remove products
- Order disposal of products
- Notify other agencies when applicable

Public Awareness Activities

- Notify consumers and general public, businesses, health care providers, community-based organizations
 - Press releases
 - Brochures
 - Fact sheets
 - Health advisories





Lead-containing traditional ceramic ware from Mexico are widely available for sale in NYC stores



Ongoing Enforcement Actions



- Between 2017-present, over 8,000 Mexican ceramic ware units have been removed from NYC stores; enforcement on-going
- 10+ distributors identified (mostly in NJ; notified NJ DOH)
- Notified the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of distributor findings; triggered US FDA investigation
- Notified National Institute of Public Health in Mexico to inform actions in Mexico
- **Gap** - this does not eliminate the hazard because families often bring such items from their home countries

Press Releases | Health Alert | Brochures



 **Commissioner Dave A. Chokshi, MD** @NYCHealthCommr · Oct 5 ...
For more information about these and other hazardous consumer products, visit nyc.gov/hazardousprodu...

Consulado General de México en Nueva York
27 East 39th Street
New York, NY 10016

Health Department Issues Lead Warning to New Yorkers: Avoid Using Traditional Ceramic Ware for Food and Drinks; May Contain Lead

Fifteen recent cases of lead poisoning have been linked with traditional ceramic ware used for preparing or serving food and drink

Traditional ceramic ware has been found to contain lead levels thousands of times greater than the allowable limit

September 28, 2021 — The Health Department today warned New Yorkers to avoid using traditional, non-food safe clay pots, cups, and dishes (ceramic ware) for cooking or serving foods and drinks. The Department investigated 15 cases of lead poisoning in children and adults associated with the use of these types of ceramic ware with elevated blood lead levels as high as 53 micrograms per deciliter (µg/dL) in recent months. A blood lead level greater than 5 µg/dL indicates a significant exposure to lead. Although individuals with elevated blood lead levels may not look or feel sick, exposure to lead can cause serious health problems. In children, lead exposure can cause learning and behavior problems; in adults, lead exposure can increase blood pressure and affect the brain, kidneys and reproductive organs. Exposure during pregnancy can increase the risk of miscarriage and affect the unborn baby.

“Some traditional ceramic ware has been found to contain high levels of lead and has been linked with lead poisoning in both children and adults,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Dave A. Chokshi**. “Do not use decorative ceramics or those not intended for food use when preparing or serving meals. If you’re not sure if it’s food safe, just err on the side of caution and don’t use it. New Yorkers who use these products should stop using them and speak with their doctor to ask for a blood lead test as soon as possible.”



Traditional or handmade ceramic ware from around the world, including Mexico, Ecuador, Turkey, Morocco and Uzbekistan, can contain lead, which can cause learning and behavior problems in children, miscarriage during pregnancy, and infertility.

- Do not use these products to prepare, cook, serve or store food or drinks.
- If you use these products to prepare, cook, serve or store food, ask your doctor for a blood lead test.

Call **311** or visit nyc.gov/leadfree for more information.



2021 Health Advisory #: 37 Elevated Levels of Lead in Traditional Ceramic Ware

- Fifteen recent cases of lead poisoning have been associated with use of traditional or handmade ceramic ware used for preparing or serving food and drink.
- Providers should ask patients, particularly individuals of Latin American, North African and Eastern European descent, whether they use these types of traditional ceramic ware for preparing foods or drinks. If a patient reports use, providers should consider conducting a blood lead test in consultation with a medical toxicologist or the New York City Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222). Advise patients against using such products for culinary purposes.
- Per New York State law health care providers must test children for blood lead at ages 1- and 2-years and screen older children up to age 6 for lead exposure. Pregnant people should also be assessed at their first prenatal visit.

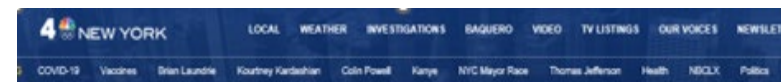
Please distribute to all clinical staff in Gynecology & Obstetrics, Pediatrics, Internal Medicine, Primary Care, Family Medicine, Complementary or Alternative Medicine, Emergency Medicine, Gastroenterology, Occupational and Environmental Health.

September 28, 2021



NYC Department of Health warns about lead found in traditional ceramic

NEWS By ANGELINE JANE BERNADE



HEALTH

15 Cases of Lead Poisoning Linked to Use of Ceramic Ware, NYC Health Department Warns

NYC OpenData

Metal Content of Consumer Products Tested by the NYC Health Department Health



Communities are still unaware!

Long-term goal:

Manufacturers produce traditional ceramic ware without elevated lead.

Short-term goal:

Raise awareness about this risk factor among the communities.

Cultural practices should be preserved, but health must be protected!



How can we work together to raise awareness about this lead risk factor within the impacted communities?



www.nyc.gov/hazardousproducts

