

Candy and Spicy Powders Imported from Mexico

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services are alerting parents that some Mexican candies and spicy powders are contaminated with lead. Consumers, especially young children and pregnant women, should avoid eating these candies because of the risk of lead poisoning.

Lead poisoning can cause a child to have permanent problems with learning, growth and behavior. A lead-poisoned woman can give birth to a lead-poisoned infant.

It's not possible to know whether a candy or spicy powder has lead by looking at the container or packaging. Also, the amount of lead can vary from package to package. So the spicy snack bought today may have little or no lead, while the next package may have a high lead level.

FDA tests show that products that have a lot of chili powder tend to have more lead problems than ones that are mostly sugar. Some examples are:

- Powder mixes of salt, chili seasoning and lemon flavor sold as snacks
- Lollipops coated with chili

Some fruit pulp candies have also been found to have lead, especially tamarind candy sold in small glazed ceramic pots. A chili-coated fruit pulp candy called "Chaca Chaca" was recalled in March 2004 for lead contamination.

Pictured below are some popular candies and spicy powders that had lead when tested in 2004.



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