



TOMÁS J. ARAGÓN, M.D., Dr.P.H
Director and State Public Health Officer

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health



GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor

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Dear Medical Provider,

Your patient is bringing this letter to you because they used a hemorrhoid ointment from Vietnam that likely contains a highly dangerous amount of lead. The product is called **Cao Bôi Trị Cây Thầu Dầu**.

In March 2024, a woman in Sacramento developed severe lead poisoning and died after using this hemorrhoid ointment. Testing of the ointment found that it contained four percent (39,000 ppm) lead. Please visit our webpage for more information: go.cdph.ca.gov/Alert-Lead-April-2024

We ask that you consider the following information and recommendations:

- The best way to diagnose lead exposure is through a blood lead level (BLL) test.
- A typical adult BLL in the U.S. is less than 1 µg/dL (microgram per deciliter).
- BLLs at or above the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reference level (currently 3.5 µg/dL) are considered elevated.
- Laboratory tests (CBC, BUN/Cr, and urinalysis) should be obtained within two weeks of a BLL result > 30 µg/dL and urgently if > 80 µg/dL. Consider labs at BLL ≥ 10 µg/dL if no baseline results are available from the past 12 months.
- Consult with a medical toxicologist or California Poison Control (1-800-222-1222) for clinical guidance on lead poisoning.
- Repeat BLL testing every 2-3 months until BLL is <3.5 µg/dL.

If you have questions or wish to receive technical assistance, please contact me at Cyrus.Rangan@cdph.ca.gov or call the Environmental Health Investigations Branch at (510) 620-3620.

Thank you,

Cyrus Rangan, MD, FAAP, FACMT
Assistant Deputy Director, Environmental and Occupational Health
Center for Healthy Communities

