

Understanding Heavy Metals in Your Drinking Water

Your water may contain very small amounts of naturally occurring metals. Some have little or no short-term health impact at the levels normally found in water, while others can be a concern even at low concentrations.

Your metal test results can help identify when further investigation or professional testing may be needed.

Copper, Aluminium & Manganese

What do they mean?

These metals may be present in water without causing a direct short-term health concern.

Why do they matter?

At the concentrations normally found in water, they are generally not associated with negative health effects.

What should I look out for?

If unusually high levels are detected, it is worth investigating the possible source and confirming the result through further testing.

Iron

What does it mean?

Iron is commonly found in water and, in most cases, its biggest impact is on the appearance, taste and general usability of the water.

Why does it matter?

Health effects may occur at extremely high concentrations. This becomes a concern at levels above **2 000 ppb**, with more significant consequences above **5 000 ppb**.

What should I look out for?

Higher iron levels may affect the colour, taste or appearance of your water. Very high readings should be investigated further.

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Mercury & Chromium

Why do they matter?

These metals should remain within drinking water guideline levels. Their presence can indicate external contamination and should be taken seriously.

What should I look out for?

Even low levels are considered unsafe in the guidance provided. If mercury or chromium is detected, further investigation and additional testing are recommended.

Lead

Why does it matter?

Lead can interfere with the body's normal processes, including haemoglobin production, and long-term exposure may cause neurological harm.

What should I look out for?

The presence of lead can indicate external contamination. Even low levels are considered unsafe and should be investigated further.

If you suspect your water or surrounding environment may be contaminated with lead, additional testing should be carried out.

Antimony, Cadmium, Arsenic, Cobalt, Nickel, Selenium & Vanadium

Why do they matter?

These metals may have long-term health implications, even when present at low concentrations.

What should I look out for?

Their presence may indicate external contamination and should be investigated further. According to the guidance provided, even low levels are considered unsafe.

If any of these metals are detected, additional testing is recommended to better understand the source and level of contamination.

Important:

The metal test strip included in the Complete Water Test Kit screens for the presence of metals in your water, but does not identify the specific metal detected.

If your test indicates a high metal reading, we recommend sending a water sample to an accredited laboratory for further testing. This will determine which metal is present and at what concentration, so that the result can be properly assessed and the appropriate action taken.

For further assistance or professional water testing, visit www.ilabwater.co.za or call 072 786 2814.