

Lead-shot game

Consuming lead is harmful, health experts advise to minimise lead consumption as much as possible. Anyone who eats lead-shot game should be aware of the risks posed by consuming large amounts of lead, especially children and pregnant women.

Eating lead-shot game on a frequent basis can expose consumers to potentially harmful levels of lead. Those who eat lead-shot game should minimise the amount they eat, especially for small game animals.

Lead-shot game refers to:

- Pheasant
- Partridge
- Black grouse
- Red grouse
- Ptarmigan
- Brown hare
- Deer
- Duck
- Goose
- Wood pigeon
- Woodcock
- Snipe
- Rabbit
- Golden plover

shot for food using pellets or balls made of lead. Eating lead-shot game meat on a frequent basis can expose you to potentially harmful levels of lead.

To minimise your risk of lead intake, if you frequently eat lead-shot game meat, particularly small game, you should cut down your consumption.

Exposure to lead can harm the developing brain and nervous system. So cutting down the amount of lead-shot game eaten is especially important for:

- toddlers
- children
- pregnant women
- women trying for a baby

Not all game is shot with lead. Generally, the large game sold in supermarkets is farmed and will have no or very low lead levels. You don't need to worry about eating this kind of game meat. If you're not sure whether game has been shot using lead ammunition or not, ask your supplier for information.

The science behind our advice

Our advice is based on a study of consumers of wild game, conducted by the FSA in Scotland and published in 2012. We've also used existing data on lead levels in these types of food in the UK.

There is no agreed safe level for lead intake. Independent scientific expert groups advise that exposure to lead should be reduced as far as possible.