Effects of tap water lead, water hardness, alcohol, and cigarettes on blood lead concentrations

SIR—This recent contribution by S J Pocock et al (March 1983, 1–7) clearly shows the role of tap water and personal habits in raised blood lead concentrations. The authors, however, conclude by stating that “because direct evidence of a comparable nature has not been shown for lead in petrol...lead in water should be given priority...”. Petrol lead sales in Boston, Massachusetts, have been shown to correlate very well with blood lead concentrations.¹ We suggest that reduction in lead exposure requires attention to both air and water.

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References

¹Rabinowitz M, Needleman HL. Petrol lead sales and umbilical cord blood lead levels in Boston, Massachusetts. Lancet 1983; i: 63.

Note: This letter was shown to the authors of the article who do not wish to reply but they would agree with the last sentence of the letter above. Editor.