

FAST FACTS

A message for health care providers

Mycobacterium tuberculosis (TB)

The problem

- Failure to recognize and report TB early leads to multiple secondary cases with potentially fatal outcomes, especially in children and medically compromised patients.

Things you can do to help stop the spread of TB

- Consider TB as a diagnosis when a patient has been treated multiple times for pneumonia or when a patient is not responding to pneumonia treatment.
- Recognize that the risk factors for TB include, but are not limited to, those who are:
 - foreign born
 - immunocompromised
 - on steroids or other immunosuppressing drugs
 - have history of previous exposure to TB disease (especially in the last two years)
 - have history of incomplete therapy for Latent TB Infection (LTBI)
 - If TB is considered moderately high in the differential diagnosis, the case should be reported to the ECDOH **immediately** as SUSPECTED by calling **858-7697**. Do not wait for culture results or completion of diagnostic work up.
 - Early reporting of suspected (not necessarily confirmed) cases leads to early public health intervention through identification and therapy of those at risk for secondary TB.
 - Reporting of certain suspected or confirmed communicable diseases is mandated under the NY State Sanitary Code (10NYCRR 2.10). A list of reportable diseases can be found at www.erie.gov/health/pdfs/NYS%20DOH%20Reportable%20diseases.pdf.
- Hang the “Think TB” poster (www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/Posters/ThinkTB.htm) in all exam rooms to encourage health care providers and patients to recognize the signs and symptoms of tuberculosis.
- Use appropriate signage advising hand hygiene and cough etiquette.

TB Testing

- The Mantoux method using 5TU purified protein derivative (PPD) antigen solution is the recommended skin testing technique for all age groups and settings.
- Companion anergy testing is no longer generally recommended.
- Interpretation of the tuberculin skin test (TST) reaction is also specific to age, lifestyle, and medical or environmental risk factors. More information on TST can be found at www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/factsheets/testing/skintesting.htm.
- TB can be very aggressive in children ages five years old and under. Regardless of the results of the TST and CXR the child should be started on window therapy if he/she was exposed to a person with active TB disease. Information on window therapy can be found at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/rr/rr5415.pdf pgs. 14,17.

Resources

- The **Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) Tuberculosis (TB) Control program** provides free:
 - Physician consultation regarding all cases and suspect cases
 - Evaluation and treatment for all active TB cases
 - Follow-up evaluation and testing for contacts
 - Preventive treatment for positive TB reactors
 - TB testing and/or chest x-rays
 - Community education regarding TB, bloodborne pathogens, and HIV confidentiality
 - Call 961-6867 for more information
- CDC TB resources www.cdc.gov/tb
- NYSDOH TB Fact Sheet www.nyhealth.gov/diseases/communicable/tuberculosis/fact_sheet.htm