

Information for Employers

Health Care organizations

All health care settings need an infection-control program designed to 1. ensure prompt detection, 2. airborne precautions, and 3. treatment of persons who have suspected or confirmed TB disease. In order to be effective, the primary emphasis of the TB infection-control program should be on achieving these three goals.

In all health care settings, particularly those in which persons are at high risk for exposure, policies and procedures for TB control should be developed, reviewed periodically, and evaluated for effectiveness to determine the actions necessary to minimize the risk for transmission of TB.

What to Do If You Have Been Exposed to TB?

If you think you have been exposed to someone with TB disease, you should contact your doctor or local health department about getting a TB skin test or a special TB blood test. Be sure to tell the doctor or nurse when you spent time with the person who has TB.

Resources

[Guidelines for Preventing the Transmission of *M. tuberculosis* in Health-Care Settings, 2005](#)

This slide set was developed as an accompaniment to the [Guidelines for Preventing the Transmission of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* in Health-Care Settings, 2005](#). This slide set provides an overview of the updated TB infection control recommendations.

Non-health care related organizations

What should I do if an employee reports having a positive TB test or that he or she has been in contact with someone who has TB?

It is important to remember that only a person with active TB disease can transmit TB bacteria to others. If an individual has been around someone with TB disease, he or she can get TB infection. However, not everyone infected with TB germs becomes sick. A person with latent TB infection cannot spread germs to other people, but can develop active TB disease in the future. Having a positive TB skin test does not necessarily mean that the person has active TB. Further testing is required to determine if the person has active TB. Refer the person with a positive TB skin test to the Tulsa Health Department for further evaluation. Contact THD at 918-595-4103 or 918-595-4111 or the [Oklahoma State Department of Health](#)

What will happen after I contact my local or state TB control program for assistance?

The TB control program will determine if the employee has latent TB infection or TB disease. Since people with latent TB infection cannot spread TB to others, nothing further will need to be done in the workplace. However, if the employee has active TB disease, the TB control program will start a contact investigation. The investigation will help them find out how the employee may have been exposed to TB and to determine who else might be at risk.

During the investigation, the health department will ask the employee about his or her job, such as the work hours, working conditions, and people who work closely with him or her. The TB control program may set up an appointment to talk with you and to tour your workplace. They may also want to talk to people who regularly visit your workplace. Throughout the investigation, they will work with you to make sure that the employee's identity is kept confidential.

Resources

[Tuberculosis Information for Employers in Non-Healthcare Settings](#)

Correctional Facility Staff and Inmates

TB control can be particularly problematic in correctional and detention facilities, in which persons from diverse backgrounds and communities are housed in close proximity for varying periods.

Effective TB prevention and control measures in correctional facilities include

- early identification of persons with TB disease through entry and periodic follow-up screening;
- successful treatment of TB disease and latent TB infection;
- appropriate use of airborne precautions (e.g., airborne infection isolation, environmental controls, and respiratory protection);
- comprehensive discharge planning; and
- thorough and efficient contact investigation.

These measures should be instituted in close collaboration with local or state health department TB-control programs and other key partners. Continuing education of inmates, detainees, and correctional facility staff is necessary to maximize cooperation and participation. To ensure TB prevention and control measures are effective, periodic program evaluation should be conducted.

Resources

[Prevention and Control of Tuberculosis in Correctional and Detention Facilities: Recommendations from CDC](#)

Long-term care facilities

Elderly nursing home residents are at greater risk for tuberculosis than elderly persons living in the community.

Nursing home employees are also at increased risk for tuberculosis when compared with other employed adults. In the CDC study, the observed case rate among nursing home employees was three times higher than the rate expected for employed adults of similar age, race, and sex (CDC, unpublished data).

Resources

[Prevention and Control of Tuberculosis in Facilities Providing Long-Term Care to the Elderly
Recommendations of the Advisory Committee for Elimination of Tuberculosis](#)