

Tuberculosis

A. Regulations

ORS 431.415 and ORS 431.416

The District or County Board of Health may adapt rules necessary to carry out its duties to ensure public health.

B. Overview

The purpose of these rules is to implement county-specific measures that are necessary for public health maintenance. Each local health department may designate and survey populations determined to be at high risk. Schools may be included in the designation.

C. Background/Rationale

There may be an increased incidence of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (TB) in certain populations. Early identification and treatment will prevent spread of this disease to persons in a school setting. Contact your local health department for rules that pertain to your School District.

D. Guidance

Roles and Responsibilities

Health Education

Basic education about TB will be included within the communicable disease curriculum. The school nurse will be able to assist staff with information specific to Tuberculosis.

School Health Services

Designated health staff will have additional knowledge about latent TB infection and active TB disease. The school nurse or designated health staff will assist the local health department with any contact investigation due to a TB exposure that involves the school.

School Counseling, Psychological and Social Services

Staff needs to be aware of resources in the community and be available to local health departments if needed to assist with TB case management or contact investigation.

Healthy School Environment

Compliance with screening and completion of treatment for Tuberculosis helps ensure a safe and healthy environment for both students and school staff.

Family and Community Involvement

In order to maintain a safe and healthy school environment, coordination between the school and community will be necessary in the event that a student or staff member is diagnosed with infectious pulmonary TB and a contact investigation is needed.

Staff Development Needed

All staff members need to keep current about the basics of latent tuberculosis infection and TB disease. Training can be obtained from the school nurse, through the local health department or through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention http://www.cdc.gov/tb/education/patient_edmaterials.htm.

E. Oregon Resources

- Local Health Departments
- Tuberculosis Program, Oregon Health Authority
<http://public.health.oregon.gov/PHD/ODPE/HST/TB/Pages/index.aspx>

F. National Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <http://www.cdc.gov/tb/>

Tuberculosis Appendix I

Basic TB Fact Sheet

What is Tuberculosis (TB)?

TB is caused by bacteria called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. There are two stages of TB:

Latent TB Infection (LTBI)

TB bacteria can live in the body without making the person sick. This is called latent TB infection. In most people who breathe in TB bacteria and become infected, the body is able to fight the bacteria to stop them from growing. However, if TB bacteria become active in the body and multiply, the person will go from having latent tuberculosis to being sick with the disease of tuberculosis. People with latent TB infection:

- Cannot spread TB to others (are not infectious)
- Have a positive TB skin test or TB blood test
- May take medicine to kill the inactive TB germs

Active TB Disease

The TB germs can become active if the immune system can't stop them from growing. Some people develop active TB disease soon after becoming infected, while others will get sick many years later. Most people with latent tuberculosis will never get sick. Persons with weakened immune systems, newly infected, and especially young children are at higher risk to develop active TB disease.

Symptoms of active TB disease of the lungs include:

- Cough lasting longer than 3 weeks
- Coughing up blood
- Fever, chills
- Fatigue or weakness
- Night sweats
- Unexplained weight loss

TB disease is curable. People with active TB disease will need to take several medicines for at least 6 months. Persons with active infectious TB are isolated and cannot return to work or school until the local health department determines they are no longer infectious.

How is TB spread?

TB is spread through the air from one person to another. The TB bacteria are put into the air when a person with TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs, sneezes, speaks, or sings. People nearby may breathe in these bacteria and become infected. However, it usually takes prolonged exposure to someone with infectious TB to become infected. TB is not spread by family or friends who do

not have active TB themselves. TB is not spread by dishes, clothes, or other kinds of items. No special cleaning is required of general-use items.

Should I get tested for TB?

TB testing is not recommended for the general public. Persons who are at increased risk for being exposed to TB receive testing based upon their risk of exposure. Foreign-born persons from countries where TB is common and people with other risk factors for TB or certain medical conditions are tested by their physicians when medically indicated.

Anyone with significant exposure to a person with infectious TB in the school setting will be notified by the local health department and given instructions as to when TB testing should take place.

Tuberculosis Appendix II

BCG: TB Vaccine

What You Should Know

What is Tuberculosis (TB)?

TB is a life-threatening disease that can be spread from person to person through the air. TB usually affects the lungs, but can develop in any part of the body.

What is BCG?

BCG, or bacille Calmette-Guérin, is a vaccine for TB disease. This vaccine is not used in the United States, but it is often given to infants and small children in other countries where TB is common.

Can people who have been vaccinated with BCG develop TB?

Yes. BCG does not always protect people from TB. After vaccination, people can still become infected with TB and may develop the disease. BCG is somewhat effective in decreasing the chance that infants and very young children will develop a serious form of TB.

Can people who have been vaccinated with BCG get a TB skin test?

Yes. BCG is not a contraindication of TB skin testing. A positive skin test ($\geq 10\text{mm}$) even in a person who has been vaccinated with BCG, usually means they have been infected with TB.

What will happen if my TB skin test is positive?

You will need a chest x-ray and medical evaluation. If there is no evidence of active TB disease, treatment for latent TB infection is usually recommended.

If you have questions, talk to your doctor or your local health department.

Tuberculosis - Appendix 3

Teaching Resources for School Nurses

1. Web Courses – TB101 <http://www.cdc.gov/tb/webcourses/tb101/>
Specific links which might be useful:
 - [How TB Spreads](#)
 - [Latent TB Infection & TB Disease](#)
 - [TB Symptoms](#)
 - [TB Risk Factors](#) (go to "more" at this link for an extended list)
 - [Testing for TB](#)
 - [Exposure to TB](#) (This resource can be of assistance for focus on what would happen with an exposure in the school setting.)
 - [Treatment for Latent TB Infection and TB Disease](#)

2. <http://www.uft.org/our-rights/tuberculosis>

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