



Public Health Division
Tuberculosis Program

Kate Brown, Governor

Oregon
Health
Authority

800 NE Oregon Street
Portland, OR 97232
phone: (503)358-8516
<http://healthoregon.org/tb>

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Dear Medical Provider,

Your patient was recently diagnosed with pulmonary TB disease and is currently infectious. Please use airborne precautions when in contact with the patient until notification by the county health department that it is no longer required.

Airborne precautions require staff wear a fit tested N95 mask or Powered Air-Purified Respirator (PAPR) whenever contact with the patient occurs. The patient (as able) should wear a surgical or procedure mask.

Ideally the patient should not be seen in the clinic environment unless an airborne infection isolation room (AIIR) (e.g. room with negative pressure) is available. Strategies to medically assess the patient without bringing the patient into the clinic might include telemedicine, a visit outdoors, home visiting, collaborative management with the county health department or meeting the patient in a hospital setting where an AIIR is available.

There are times when acuity of illness or the need for essential medical procedures require the patient to be seen in the clinic setting. This can be done safely with appropriate precautions:

- Schedule the patient appointment for the end of the day if possible
- Take patient to designated room immediately upon arrival at clinic. If possible, have the patient enter through a separate entrance to the facility. Do not leave the patient in the waiting area.
- Staff with direct patient contact should wear an N95 mask or PAPR during the visit.
- Patient should wear a surgical or procedure mask.
- After the visit, shut down the room with signage alerting staff to not enter. Determine the amount of time to keep the room closed by calculating an air clearance rate. If you are unable to calculate the air clearance rate, leave the room closed down a minimum of four hours.

Thank you for your assistance. You may contact your county health department or me at 503-358-8516 or heidi.behm@state.or.us with questions and concerns. A list of references and resources regarding the above recommendations follows this letter.

Sincerely,
Heidi Behm, RN, MPH
Tuberculosis Controller/Nurse Consultant
Public Health Division, Oregon Health Authority

Resources for Management of Infectious TB Patient in Clinic

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Guidelines for Preventing the Transmission of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* in Health-Care Settings, 2005. MMWR 2005; 54 (No. RR-17).
Obtained at: https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5417a1.htm?s_cid=rr5417a1_e)

Curry International TB Center, 2011. *Tuberculosis Control: A Practical Manual for Preventing TB*.

Obtained at: <http://www.currytbcenter.ucsf.edu/products/tuberculosis-infection-control-practical-manual-preventing-tb>

Oregon Safety and Health Administration. Safety and Health Topics: Tuberculosis.

Obtained at: <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/tuberculosis/>

Siegel JD, Rhinehart E, Jackson M, Chiarello L, and the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee. 2007 Guideline for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Settings. Obtained at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/pdf/isolation2007.pdf>

Tuberculosis Program, Oregon Health Authority. TB and Infection Control.

Obtained at:

<http://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/CommunicableDisease/Tuberculosis/Pages/managetb.aspx>