

Tuberculosis Narrative for the Alabama Department of Education

ALABAMA
PUBLIC
HEALTH

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) advises the following:

- 1.** ADPH is conducting an intensive contact tracing and investigation in Marion, Perry County, Alabama, due to 27 reported total cases of TB disease since January 2014. This is a cooperative effort between the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- 2.** TB is both a treatable and preventable disease.
- 3.** Screening in Marion, Perry County, is for two conditions, Latent TB infection (LTBI) and TB disease.

4. Patients with LTBI

- a. Have a positive blood test or skin test for TB.
- b. Are not contagious to other people.
- c. Have no symptoms of illness.

LTBI patients receive preventive medicine to reduce their risk of developing TB disease. The overall lifetime risk of TB disease if not treated for LTBI is about 10 percent, but can be higher in children less than 5 years of age, older persons, and persons with health conditions such as diabetes, immunosuppression, HIV, lung disease, and other co morbidities.

5. Patients with TB disease

- a. Have a positive blood test or skin test.
- b. An abnormal chest X-Ray.
- c. Have symptoms of cough, fever, night sweats, weight loss, appetite change, or blood in their sputum (mucous).

TB disease is treated with a regimen of at least four medicines. Each dose of medicine is given to the patient by ADPH TB Control staff. This method is called directly observed therapy (DOT) and is a standard of care practiced in TB Control in Alabama for over 30 years.

6. TB transmission

- a. Occurs when a person with TB disease is in a small space with low airflow or ventilation.
- b. Is related to close, personal, frequent exposure to a person with TB disease.

- 7.** During this screening effort, all citizens of Perry County, Alabama, are advised to continue their usual daily activities including work, school, faith-based activities, recreational activities, shopping, travel, and sporting events.

Screening results as of January 26, 2016

Number of patients screened: 1,365

Number of probable LTBI patients in those screened: 85

Number exhibiting signs or symptoms of TB disease: 0

- 8.** As of January 26, 2016, 56 chest xrays have been read. The remaining patients are scheduled for chest X-rays the week of February 1, 2016.
- 9.** One new patient with TB disease has been identified. This patient is currently on medication, staying at home, and being monitored daily by the health department.
- 10.** The ADPH TB Control Program follows the guidance of the CDC, the American Thoracic Society, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Association of Infection Control Practitioners, the Infectious Disease Society of America, and the Southeastern National Tuberculosis Center.

- 11.** The ADPH TB Control Program has a 10-member medical advisory board composed of physicians representing academic medicine, private practice, and public health. ADPH has four board-certified physicians directly involved in TB control with expertise in infectious diseases, pediatrics, pulmonology, and internal medicine.