



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Perry County Health Department to resume regular TB testing by appointment only Feb. 8

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Perry County Health Department will schedule appointments for tuberculosis (TB) screenings on Mondays and Tuesdays from 9 a.m. until 2:45 p.m. beginning Monday, Feb. 8. Services are by appointment only and are offered at no charge.

“Although the phase of TB testing in Perry in which financial incentives were offered has ended,” Acting Area Administrator Ricky Elliott said, “the Alabama Department of Public Health will continue to provide free TB testing in Perry County.” If anyone would like to be tested, they can call the Perry County Health Department at 334-683-6153 to schedule an appointment.”

Public health officials have stressed that preventing and treating TB will save lives. Since TB screening began on Jan. 11, 1,813 patients have been screened and 100 were positive for latent TB infection. One additional case of TB disease was identified. The individual is doing well and is not hospitalized.

“There is a very important difference between latent TB infection and TB disease,” said Pam Barrett of the Division of TB Control. Persons with latent TB infection cannot spread the germ to other people. These persons have a positive TB skin test or a positive blood test for TB. They developed a positive test from being in close contact with a person who had TB disease.

Without treatment, about 5 to 10 percent of persons with latent TB infection will develop TB disease at some time in their lives. Children, elderly persons, immunosuppressed persons, and persons with lung disease or diabetes who have been infected with the TB germ are at higher risk to develop TB disease.

Assistant State Health Officer Dr. Karen Landers said, “During this initiative we have had good support from the citizens as well as community leaders who have been involved in meetings to educate and inform about TB. If Perry County residents were not screened in January, we hope they will come in for these clinics.”

Symptoms of TB include cough lasting more than two weeks, shortness of breath, fever, night sweats, weight loss and fatigue. A person may be infected with the TB germ and have no symptoms. Fortunately, patients can be treated preventively before becoming ill.

The Perry County Health Department is located at 1748 S. Washington St., Marion. All services are confidential and are provided at no charge.

For further information or questions, please contact Pam Barrett, Director, Division of TB Control, at (334) 467-8208, or pam.barrett@adph.state.al.us.

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