HEALTH ADVISORY #360   **June 13, 2024**

TUBERCULOSIS AWARENESS

> *Please distribute to Healthcare Providers, Hospitals, Laboratories, Family Planning Providers, Emergency Rooms, Community Health Centers, College Health Centers, Community-Based Organizations, and Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Pediatric, Adolescent Medicine, Infectious Disease, and Primary Care Providers*

The Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) is experiencing an increase in Tuberculosis (TB) cases. Rapid identification of cases is essential in controlling the spread of TB.

SUMMARY

- Tuberculosis is a bacterial disease usually affecting the lungs.
- Erie County is experiencing an increase in TB cases, 10 in 2022, 14 in 2023 and 11 in 2024 as of 5/31/2024. If the number of Erie County TB cases continues at this rate in 2024, cases will surpass the yearly number of cases reported over the past ten years.
- The 2023 Erie County TB case demographics are 71% male, 65% between the ages of 15 and 40 years of age and 86% were born outside of the United States. The TB cases for 2024 follow the same demographic patterns.
- With the increase in TB cases, early detection, treatment, reporting and the management of cases and contacts are essential in preventing serious medical problems and the further spread of the disease.
- Persons at a higher risk for developing TB are immunocompromised, have diabetes or HIV, have substance use issues or haven't been adequately treated for TB in the past.
- Rapid testing and reporting of TB by medical providers will help to control the spread of the disease.
- The ECDOH TB Control Program is able to assist providers with TB testing and management.
- **To report an Erie County resident with suspected TB or if the suspected case is in an Erie County facility, contact the ECDOH Tuberculosis Clinic at (716) 858-2142.**

WHO SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR TESTING

Medical Providers are strongly encouraged to consider TB testing when patients have TB symptoms and one of the following risk factors:
- multiple bouts of pneumonia over the past year or years
- foreign born
- migrated from areas of the world with high TB incidences

- are or have been homeless
- live or have lived in high risk congregate settings
- medical risk factors (immunocompromised, HIV, diabetes, substance use etc.)
- meet one or more of the demographic patterns as described above or
  have been identified as a TB contact.

INITIAL SCREENING TESTS

Two types of screening tests for TB are currently available in the US: the interferon-gamma release assay (IGRA) and the tuberculin skin test (TST). The IGRA requires a single venous blood sample that measures the CD4 T-cell response to specific *M tuberculosis* antigens and laboratory processing within 8 to 30 hours after collection. Three types of IGRA are currently approved by the US Food and Drug Administration: QuantiFERON-TB Gold In-Tube (Qiagen), QuantiFERON-Gold Plus (Qiagen), and T-SPOT.*TB* (Oxford Immunotec Global). The TST requires trained personnel to administer intradermal purified protein derivative and interpret the response 48 to 72 hours later.

Consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, tuberculosis disease is diagnosed by medical history, physical examination, chest radiograph, and other laboratory tests. These additional examinations, diagnostics, and tests are essential to completing a diagnosis.

REPORTING CASES

Suspected and confirmed cases of TB are required to be reported immediately to the county where the patient resides. **To report an Erie County resident with suspected TB or if the suspected case is in an Erie County facility, contact the ECDOH Tuberculosis Clinic at (716) 858-2142.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Erie County Department of Health TB Clinic:
https://www3.erie.gov/health/tuberculosis-tb-control-program

Erie County 2023 Tuberculosis Report:
https://www3.erie.gov/health/sites/www3.erie.gov.health/files/2022-07/tbprofile.pdf

NYSDOH Tuberculosis Resources for Providers:
https://health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/tuberculosis/providers.htm

NYSDOH Press release from March 2023:
https://www.health.ny.gov/press/releases/2023/2023-03-23_world_tb_day.htm

NYSDOH Tuberculosis data page:
https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/diseases/communicable/tuberculosis/

CDC Think. Test. Treat TB
https://www.cdc.gov/thinktesttreattb/healthcare-providers.html

Health Category Definitions:

Health Alert FLASH: conveys the highest level of importance due to a large-scale, catastrophic public health emergency; warrants immediate action or attention
Health Alert Priority: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention to a health problem or situation
Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action
Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary

The Erie County Department of Health does not provide medical advice. The information provided on the Erie County Department of Health website is not an attempt to practice medicine and is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. It is for informational purposes only. Always seek the advice of your personal physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition or issue. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of the content found on the Erie County Department of Health website or this correspondence.

The ECDOH Health Alert & Advisory System is an e-mail notification system designed to alert community partners about important health related information. You can sign up to receive alerts & advisories at https://www3.erie.gov/health/form/health-alert-registration.