



New Hampshire Health Alert Network

Health.Alert@nh.gov

Status: Actual
Message Type: Alert
Severity: Moderate
Sensitive: Not Sensitive
Message Identifier: NH-HAN #20120323 Tuberculosis in Concord, NH, Student
Delivery Time: 12 hours
Acknowledgement: No
Originating Agency: NH Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services

DATE: March 23, 2012 **TIME:** 1:00 PM EDT

TO: Physicians, Physician Assistants, Nurses, Infection Control Practitioners, Infectious Disease Specialists, Hospital Emergency Departments, Hospital CEOs, Laboratory Response Network, Manchester Health Department, Nashua Health Department, NHHA, NH School Nurses and Administrators, Community Health Centers, EWIDS, DHHS Outbreak Team, DPHS Investigation Team, Public Health Network, and DPHS Management Team

FROM: Elizabeth A. Talbot, MD, Deputy State Epidemiologist

SUBJECT: Tuberculosis in Concord, NH, Student

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services is investigating a case of active tuberculosis in a student at the Dame School in Concord, New Hampshire.

- This student is not considered highly contagious and was in the school only several days, so it is unlikely that other students or staff were infected.
- DPHS is conducting a contact investigation, and if it is determined that any students need testing or treatment the families will be notified by DPHS.
- If you have any further questions or concerns, you can contact the DPHS Bureau of Infectious Disease Control at 603-271-4496.

Attachments: Press Release—DHHS Conducts Tuberculosis Investigation 3.23.12
Tuberculosis Fact Sheet

For any questions regarding the contents of this message, please contact NH DHHS-DPHS Bureau of Infectious Disease Control at 603-271-4496.

After hours or toll free (in NH) at 800-852-3345, ext. 4496 or 603-271-5300 and ask for the public health professional on call.

DEFINITION OF TERMS AND ALERTING VOCABULARY

Message Type

Alert: Original alert
Update: Prior alert has been updated and superseded
Cancel: Prior alert has been cancelled
Error: Prior alert has been retracted

Status

Actual: Refers to a live event
Exercise: Designated recipients must respond to the communication or alert
Test: Related to a technical and/or system test

Severity

Extreme: Extraordinary threat to life or property
Severe: Significant threat to life or property
Moderate: Possible threat to life or property
Minor: Minimal threat to life or property
Unknown: Unknown threat to life or property

Sensitive

Sensitive: Indicates the alert contains sensitive content
Not Sensitive: Indicates non-sensitive content

Message Identifier

A unique alert identifier that is generated upon alert activation

Delivery Time

Indicates the time frame for the delivery of the alert

Acknowledgement

Indicates whether an acknowledgement on the part of the recipient is required to confirm that the alert was received, and the time frame in which a response is required.

Originating Agency

A guaranteed unique identifier for the agency originating the alert.

Alerting Program

The program sending the alert or engaging in alerts and communications using PHIN Communication and Alerting (PCA) as a vehicle for their delivery.

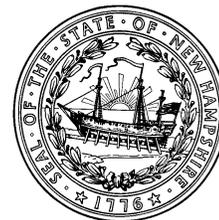
You have received this message based upon the information contained within our emergency notification database.

If you have a different or additional e-mail or fax address that you would prefer to be used, please contact:

Denise M. Krol, MS
NH HAN Coordinator
Denise.Krol@dhhs.state.nh.us

Business Hours: 8 AM – 4 PM
Tel: 603-271-4596
Fax: 603-271-0545

NH Department of Health and Human Services
129 Pleasant Street – Hugh Gallen State Office Park
Concord, NH 03301



PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 23, 2012

CONTACT
Public Information Office
603-271-9391
Twitter: NHDHHSPIO

Facebook: NHDepartmentOfHealthAndHumanServices

DHHS Conducts Tuberculosis Investigation

Concord, NH – The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has identified a patient with tuberculosis at Dame School in Concord. The Division of Public Health Services (DPHS) staff is conducting an investigation to determine if any other students or staff were exposed to the tuberculosis bacterium. DPHS has been working in cooperation with the administration of the School and the family. A determination will be made shortly if others need to be tested for tuberculosis exposure.

“Tuberculosis is generally difficult to spread from one person to another and requires prolonged contact,” said Dr. José Montero, Director of Public Health at DHHS, “and in this case it seems unlikely that anyone else was exposed. However, we always conduct a thorough investigation when it comes to reportable diseases and we certainly will in this case as well.”

Tuberculosis is caused by a bacterium that usually infects the lungs but can manifest itself in any area of the body. It is treatable with an extended course of medications. Tuberculosis is usually spread through coughing by the infected person, which causes the bacteria to become airborne. The symptoms of active tuberculosis include coughing, night sweats, fever, and weight loss.

There will be a public meeting for parents at the Dame School tonight at 5:30 pm. For more information about tuberculosis, visit the Centers for Disease Control website at www.cdc.gov, the DHHS website at www.dhhs.nh.gov, or call the NH DHHS Communicable Disease Control Section at 1-603-271-4496 or 1-800-852-3345 x4496.

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Attachment: Tuberculosis Fact Sheet

Tuberculosis

What is tuberculosis?

Tuberculosis, or TB, is a disease caused by a germ, or bacterium, called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. The germ can attack any part of the body, but it usually attacks the lungs. TB was once the leading cause of death in the United States, and it is still a leading cause of death in the world.

What are the symptoms of TB?

Symptoms of tuberculosis depend on where in the body the TB germs are growing. TB germs usually grow in the lungs. TB in the lungs may cause:

- a bad cough that lasts longer than 2 weeks
- pain in the chest
- coughing up blood or sputum (phlegm from deep inside the lungs)
- weakness or fatigue
- weight loss
- no appetite
- chills
- fever
- sweating at night

How does someone get TB?

Tuberculosis is spread through the air from one person to another. The germs are coughed or sneezed into the air by a person who is sick with TB disease of the lungs or throat. People nearby may breathe these in and become infected. The germs can settle in the lungs and begin to grow. From there they can move through the blood to other parts of the body, such as the kidney, spine, and brain. TB in the lungs or throat can be infectious, i.e., the germs can be spread to other people. TB in other parts of the body usually cannot spread to others. People who can spread germs to others must stay at home: out of school, work, or other public places.

What is the difference between active TB and latent TB infection?

In most people who breathe in TB germs and become infected, the body is able to fight the bacteria to stop them from growing. The germs become inactive, but they remain alive in the body and can become active some time in the future. This is called latent TB infection.

A Person with Latent TB Infection (LTBI)	A Person with Active TB Disease
Has TB germs in his/her body, but the germs are inactive	Has active TB germs in his/her body
Does not feel sick and cannot spread the germs to others	Feels sick and experiences symptoms such as coughing, fever, and weight loss
Has the potential to one day get sick if the TB germs become active and multiply	Is capable of spreading the disease to others if the TB germs are active in the lungs or throat

Is there a test for TB?

A TB skin test is the only way to find out if you have latent TB infection. You can get a skin test at your doctor's office. A health care worker will inject a small amount of testing fluid (called tuberculin) just under the skin of the lower part of your arm. After 2 or 3 days, the health care worker

will measure your reaction to the test. You should get tested for TB if:

- you have spent time with a person with known or suspected TB disease
- you have HIV infection or another condition that puts you at high risk for TB
- you think you might have TB disease
- you are from a country where TB disease is very common (most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe)
- you live somewhere in the U.S. or in a setting where TB disease is more common (for example: some large cities, homeless shelters, migrant farm camps, correctional facilities, and some nursing homes).

Is there a vaccine for TB?

BCG is a vaccine for TB, but it is not used in the U.S. It is often given to infants and small children in countries where TB is common to prevent them from getting seriously ill with TB disease. BCG does not always protect people from getting sick with TB and it does not prevent latent TB infection. If you were vaccinated with BCG, you can still have a TB skin test to determine if you are infected with TB germs.

Are there certain risk factors for TB?

Anyone can be infected with tuberculosis. The germs can become active if the body's ability to fight disease (the immune system) cannot stop them from growing. The active germs begin to multiply in the body and cause TB disease. Some people develop TB disease soon after becoming infected, before their body can fight the TB bacteria. Other people may get sick later, when their immune system becomes weak for some reason. Babies and young children often have weak immune systems. Other people can have weakened immune systems, too, especially people with any of these conditions:

- HIV, the virus that causes AIDS
- substance abuse
- silicosis
- cancer of the head and neck
- leukemia or Hodgkin's disease
- severe kidney disease

- low body weight/malnutrition
- certain medical treatments (such as corticosteroid treatment or organ transplants)
- diabetes

Is there a cure for TB?

Yes, TB disease can almost always be cured with medicines taken for at least 6 months, but the medicine must be taken exactly as you are instructed and all the medicine must be finished. Several different drugs are used to treat someone with TB disease because there are many germs to be killed and several different drugs together do a better job of killing all the bacteria and preventing them from becoming resistant to the drugs. People with latent TB infection can usually take one medicine for 9 months to prevent them from getting sick with TB disease in the future.

What do I do if I have some of the symptoms of TB or think I might have been exposed to TB?

Contact your health care provider as soon as possible.

How did the New Hampshire Division of Public Health find out that I have TB or LTBI?

TB and LTBI are two of over 50 diseases required by New Hampshire law to be reported to the NH Division of Public Health. Public health staff members might contact you to discuss your diagnosis and treatment. It is their job to be sure you get better and don't spread disease to other people in your family or community.

For specific concerns about tuberculosis, call the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Communicable Disease Control Section at 1-603-271-4496 or 1-800-852-3345 x4496. For further information, refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov or the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services website at www.dhhs.nh.gov.