



Recommendations for Tuberculosis Screening in Long-Term Care & Retirement Homes

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESIDENTS

All new residents must undergo a history and physical examination by a physician/nurse practitioner within 90 days prior to admission or within 14 days after admission. It is recommended that this assessment include:

1. A symptom review for active pulmonary TB (refer to “Checklist for Clinicians”)
2. A chest x-ray (posterior-anterior and lateral) taken within 90 days prior to admission.
3. If signs and symptoms and/or chest x-ray indicate potential active TB, the resident should not be admitted until 3 sputum specimens are negative for *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. Specimens can be collected a minimum of 1 hour apart and submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for testing (acid fast bacilli and culture). Note: It can take up to 8 weeks for a final culture report to be generated.
4. In addition to the above, a 2-step tuberculin skin test (TST) is recommended for residents < 65 years of age who are previously skin test negative or unknown. If the TST is positive, treatment of latent TB infection (LTBI) should be considered. A TST is not recommended for residents with a previous positive TST.

Tuberculin skin tests should not be done routinely upon admission for residents 65 years of age or older. If a TST was previously done, record the date and result of the most recent TST.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESIDENTS ADMITTED FOR SHORT TERM STAY (< 3 months)

Residents in facilities for short term care should receive an assessment and symptom review by a physician/nurse practitioner to rule out active TB, within 90 days prior to admission or within 14 days after admission. If the symptom review indicates potential disease, a chest x-ray must be obtained and active TB ruled out (see #3 above). A TST for residents in short term care is not recommended.

MANAGEMENT OF RESIDENTS WITH SUSPECTED ACTIVE TB

If, at any time, active TB is suspected in a resident, the individual should be isolated immediately (preferably in a negative pressure room). If the facility does not have a negative pressure room, the resident should be transferred to an appropriate facility as soon as possible. Immediate steps should be taken to ensure appropriate medical care, investigation and follow-up according to facility policies and procedures. Elgin St. Thomas Public Health should be notified and consulted regarding next steps.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR TUBERCULOSIS

Under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. H. 7, diagnoses of TB infection and cases of suspect and confirmed TB disease are reportable to Public Health. For more information about how to report/manage cases of TB infection or disease, please contact Elgin St. Thomas Public Health.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

The following assessment must be initiated within **6 months before starting work or within 14 days after starting work**:

PERSON WITH UNKNOWN Tuberculosis Skin Test (TST)			
A 2-step TST is required	If both tests are negative, no further testing is required If either test is positive, refer to *person with a positive TST		
PERSON WITH DOCUMENTED RESULTS OF PREVIOUS 2-STEP TST			
If both tests were negative	If done > 6 months ago A 1-step TST is necessary Note: if the result of this TST is positive, refer to *person with a positive TST If done < 6 months ago, no further testing is recommended		
If any previous test was positive	Refer to *person with a positive TST		
*PERSON WITH A POSITIVE TST			
Report person with positive TST to Elgin St. Thomas Public Health.	A physical exam including symptom review and a chest x-ray are recommended to rule out active TB. Note: the chest x-ray can be from within the last 3 months unless the person is symptomatic. Further skin testing is not recommended. The person should be informed of the signs and symptoms of active TB.		
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%; padding: 5px;"> If the person has an abnormal chest x-ray or symptoms of respiratory TB disease: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collect 3 sputum samples at least 1 hour apart. 2. Should not work until physician provides documentation that the person does not have active respiratory TB. </td> <td style="width: 40%; padding: 5px;"> If person has no symptoms: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can continue to work while physician completes assessment to rule out active respiratory TB. </td> </tr> </table>	If the person has an abnormal chest x-ray or symptoms of respiratory TB disease: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collect 3 sputum samples at least 1 hour apart. 2. Should not work until physician provides documentation that the person does not have active respiratory TB. 	If person has no symptoms: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can continue to work while physician completes assessment to rule out active respiratory TB.
If the person has an abnormal chest x-ray or symptoms of respiratory TB disease: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collect 3 sputum samples at least 1 hour apart. 2. Should not work until physician provides documentation that the person does not have active respiratory TB. 	If person has no symptoms: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can continue to work while physician completes assessment to rule out active respiratory TB. 		

Note: Persons with medical conditions that severely weaken the immune system may have a negative TST even though they have TB infection or disease. Recommend further assessment by a specialist with expertise in tuberculosis (i.e. Infectious Disease, Respirologist). Volunteers include those who expect to work regularly during the next year (approximately a half day per week or more).

REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTRACT WORKERS AND STUDENTS

Supplying agencies or schools are responsible for pre-placement TB assessment and follow-up. Facilities are responsible for confirming that these arrangements are in place prior to accepting contract workers/students.

REGULAR SCREENING FOR RESIDENTS, EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

Annual TB skin testing is **not** recommended. Annual chest x-rays are also **not** recommended in the assessment of people with positive results. If a case of active TB occurs in the facility, contact follow-up will be coordinated by Elgin St. Thomas Public Health. TB skin testing is free for persons identified as a contact of a case of TB disease. Medication for treatment of TB infection and TB disease is free through Public Health.

Reference: Canadian Tuberculosis Standards, 7th edition, 2013.