



**Erie County
Department of
Health**



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GALE R. BURSTEIN, MD, MPH, FAAP
COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH

HEALTH ADVISORY #365

February 13, 2025

TUBERCULOSIS RECOGNITION IN PERSONS RELOCATING OR TRAVELING FROM HIGH-RISK COUNTRIES

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 from people relocating from high-risk countries. Rapid identification and treatment of cases is essential in controlling the spread and minimizing the burden 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, 17 in 2024 and 3 cases in 2025 as of 2/4/2025.
- In 2024, 16 of the reported 17 TB cases (94%) were born outside of the United States. The last 8 TB cases in Erie County (identified between 10/26/2024-2/4/2025) relocated to the United States from Bangladesh. These cases have ranged in age from 7 weeks to 80 years.
- The 17 TB cases in 2024 led to 283 identified contacts to be investigated. Early detection and treatment of TB cases and their contacts is essential to prevent serious medical complications and decrease the burden of contact investigations and disease transmission.
- Persons at a higher risk for developing TB include those born outside of the United States, travel history to high-risk countries, immunocompromised, diabetes or HIV diagnosis, substance use history or prior incomplete/inadequate TB treatment.
- 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:



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- foreign born
- relocated from areas of the world with high TB incidences
- travel to places where TB is common
- multiple bouts of pneumonia over the past year or years
- current or past homelessness
- current or past high-risk congregate setting resident
- 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 TB screening tests 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. ECDOH may assist with medical evaluation.

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:



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<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 TB Risk and People Born in or Who Travel to Places Where TB is Common

<https://www.cdc.gov/tb/risk-factors/country.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. [Sign up to receive alerts & advisories.](#)