1. All calls from the media should be directed immediately to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:

Main Media Relations Line: (XXX) XXX-XXXX or *<insert email>*

1. If caller asks if their child should be tested for tuberculosis – Recommendations for TB testing have been communicated with affected families via a separate letter. This letter contained additional information regarding the date/time of testing and additional documents to complete. Testing is not recommended for your child at this time. Parents always have the option of having their child evaluated by their personal physician. If you choose to do so, you are advised to take the information provided in that letter with you to your physician.
2. If caller says they received a letter/email advising their child needs tuberculosis or TB testing: Testing will occur at the school on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(date). TB testing permission slips must be returned to the school with your student for them to get tested. If your child does not have a permission slip, you will be contacted by a \_\_\_\_\_ staff person to obtain your permission to test.
3. If caller says their child missed the testing at school on \_\_\_\_\_(date) - If your child missed testing at the school, please call \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at XXX-XXX-XXXX for a testing appointment at the health department. Testing at the health department will still be at no cost to you.
4. If the caller says their child was tested on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) and they want to know how and when they will receive results – Positive results will be called to the parent/guardian. Negative results will be mailed to the address provided by \_\_\_\_\_\_ (date). If you have not received results at all by \_\_\_\_\_ (date), please call \_\_\_\_\_ at XXX-XXX-XXXX.
5. If caller asks if it is safe to have their child with family or other children during the contact investigation – The Symptoms of TB include: a bad cough that lasts 3 weeks or longer, pain in the chest, coughing up blood or sputum, weakness or fatigue, weight loss, no appetite, chills, fever, sweating at night. If your child has none of these symptoms there is no reason to change any plans or to isolate your child.
   * If the caller states that child has these symptoms, obtain the caller’s name and number and call a TB staff with the information.
6. If the caller has a question or concern that cannot be answered using the guide below, obtain the caller’s name and number and call a TB staff with the information.

*Caller Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Caller Phone #\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Name of Health Department staff that returned call\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TB Nurse Name** | **TB Nurse Cell Number** |
| <*insert TB experts who will be on call to answer questions that cannot be answered through this guide*> |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**TB CARELINE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**What is TB?**

Tuberculosis (TB) is a disease that is spread through the air from one person to another. When someone who is sick with TB coughs, speaks, laughs, or sneezes, people nearby may breathe TB bacteria into their lungs. TB usually infects the lungs.

TB is NOT spread by shaking someone’s hand, sharing food or drink, touching bed linens or toilet seats, sharing toothbrushes or kissing.

**What are the symptoms of TB?**

Symptoms include: a bad cough that lasts 3 weeks or longer, pain in the chest, coughing up blood or sputum, weakness or fatigue, weight loss, no appetite, chills, fever, sweating at night.

**How to test for TB?**

There are 2 tests available to determine if a person has been infected with the germ that can cause TB disease: the TB blood test known as the IGRA or the tuberculin skin test (TST). The TB team will be drawing blood unless there is a reason to do the skin test.

**Why is a TB blood test performed?**

A TB blood test can determine if a person has been infected with the germ that can cause TB disease. This is also referred to as an IGRA test.

**How does the TB blood test work?**

A nurse or lab technician will take a blood sample from the person’s arm and send the sample to a laboratory. The laboratory will test the sample to determine if the person being tested has been infected with the germ that can cause TB disease.

**Why is a Tuberculin skin test performed?**

A TB skin test can determine if a person has been infected with the germ that can cause TB disease.

**How does the Tuberculin skin test work?**

The TB skin test is performed by injecting a small amount of fluid (called tuberculin) into the skin in the lower part of the arm. A person given the tuberculin skin test must return within 48 to 72 hours to have a trained health care worker look for a reaction on the arm.

**Why are you recommending testing for some individuals in the school?**

If Health Department staff recommends testing it is because an individual at the school, who is no longer there, was identified as having Tuberculosis. Specific individuals who were in close contact with this individual may have been exposed to the germ that causes TB and should be tested.

**How much does the TB testing cost?**

The Health Department will be providing the test at no cost to individuals who have been identified as close contacts.

**What does a TB test result mean?**

* **Negative Result:** This means the person’s body did not react to the test and TB disease is not likely (or that the person does not have the TB germ).
* **Positive Result:** This means the person’s body was infected with TB germ. Additional tests are needed to determine whether or not the person has active TB disease.

**What if the TB test is positive?**

**I**f the TB test is positive, you will be contacted by a Health Department nurse to discuss the test results and to schedule additional tests to determine whether or not you have active TB disease. These tests may include a chest x-ray, blood test and physician’s examination. You will not have to pay for the tests if the Health Department provides the testing. Medications for both TB and latent TB infection will be provided at no cost.

**If my test is positive, what is the likelihood that I will get sick or develop active TB?**

Overall, about 5 to 10% of people who have been infected by the TB germ but who have no symptoms or don’t feel sick will develop TB disease at some time in their lives. For persons whose immune systems are weak, the risk of developing TB disease is much higher than for persons with normal immune systems.