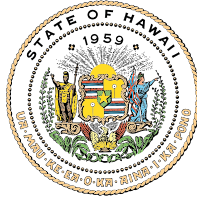


CORRECTION: “World Tuberculosis Day” occurs on Friday, March 24, 2023



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Department of Health raises awareness on “World Tuberculosis Day”

HONOLULU, HI – In observance of “World Tuberculosis Day” on Friday, March 24, 2023, the Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) Tuberculosis (TB) Control Branch would like to encourage Hawai'i's at-risk residents to get tested for early TB diagnosis.

“Approximately 1.5 million people die from tuberculosis worldwide every year,” said Dr. Genevieve S. Ley, chief of the DOH TB Control Branch. However, active TB disease (the contagious form of TB) can be cured with medications. People with latent TB infection (the non-contagious form of TB) can also be treated to prevent progression to active TB disease.

In 2022, Hawai'i had 102 cases of active TB disease. Symptoms of active TB include a prolonged cough of three weeks or longer, unexplained weight loss, fever, sweating at night, and feeling weak or tired.

People with latent TB will not have any current symptoms, but the illness can progress to active TB if not treated. DOH estimates that as many as 70,000 to 100,000 Hawai'i residents could be infected with latent TB.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the following non-healthcare workers are considered at increased risk for TB infection and should be tested:

- People who have spent time with someone who has TB disease
- People from a country where TB disease is common (e.g. Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands)
- People who live or work in high-risk settings (e.g. facilities and homeless shelters)
- Infants, children and adolescents exposed to adults who are at increased risk for latent tuberculosis infection or TB disease

DOH recommends that healthcare providers ensure that their patients who are diagnosed with latent TB complete a course of treatment.

Many employers require TB clearance for workers. Testing for TB clearance is available at 17 locations statewide through DOH. [Click here to learn more.](#)

In its effort to promote TB testing, the “TB Control Program” will be at the Star Advertiser Career Expo on Wednesday, April 12, 2023, at the Neal Blaisdell Center Exhibition Hall, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. DOH public health nurses will be on hand to administer skin tests to those needing a TB clearance for work. Clients receiving skin testing at this expo will be instructed to return to Lanakila Health Center to have their tests read, and will receive a chest X-ray (CXR), if positive.

The DOH “TB Control Program” is part of the Communicable Disease and Public Health Nursing Division. Its mission is to reduce the incidence of tuberculosis in the state by providing effective prevention, detection, treatment, and educational services. Examinations and treatment are available free of charge.

DOH has resources available to help individuals and clinicians diagnose and treat tuberculosis. For more information on tuberculosis or the program’s services and activities, call (808) 832-5731 or visit health.hawaii.gov/tb

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