

Infectious Disease Associates

725 Irving Ave., Suite 311, Syracuse, NY, 13210
315-464-9360

March 2011

IDA'S Advice

World TB Day is March 24. This annual event commemorates the date in 1882 when Dr. Robert Koch announced his discovery of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, the bacteria that cause tuberculosis (TB).

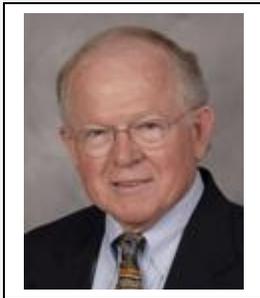
TB Elimination



World TB Day March 24

Is there a TB Specialist in my area?

Answer: Yes!



Donald Blair, M.D.

**Medical Director, Designated AIDS Center
Medical Director, OCHD Bureau of
Disease Control; TB Control**

Dr. Blair brings a vast experience of over 30 years in the field of Infectious Diseases to the Upstate Community. Fostering an environment of excellence in patient care, a structured and organization learning environment balanced with an excellence in teaching that is only found in a Professor with an expansive clinical and management experience.

Clinical Interests - HIV care

Infectious Diseases consultation

Tuberculosis control:

Onondaga County Health Department.

TB Elimination: Together We Can!

Tuberculosis is one of the world's deadliest diseases: one-third of the world's population is infected with TB; each year, over 9 million people around the world become sick with TB; and each year, there are almost 2 million deaths worldwide.

In the United States, TB rates have been declining slowly since 1993. Despite this trend, there remains a disproportionate burden of TB among racial and ethnic minorities in the United States. This is due to unequal distribution of TB risk factors that can increase the chance of developing the disease.

Together, we can reach the goal of TB elimination through collaboration and by strengthening partnerships. This country's progress in controlling and eventually eliminating TB will only be possible if local, state, national, and international partners from all sectors of our society join resources and collaborate together. Our united effort is needed both to reach those at highest risk for TB, and to identify and implement innovative strategies to improve testing and treatment among high-risk populations.

CDC and its domestic and international partners, including the [National TB Controllers Association](#), [Stop TB USA](#), and the global [Stop TB Partnership](#), are taking many steps to prevent further spread of TB and to reduce the overall burden of the disease. CDC's efforts range from developing new treatment regimens and increasing the capacity of health professionals to provide adequate diagnosis and treatment, to issuing new guidelines for improved screening and treatment

Reference: www.cdc.gov

What is TB?

Tuberculosis (TB) is a disease caused by germs that are spread from person to person through the air. TB usually affects the lungs, but it can also affect other parts of the body, such as the brain, the kidneys, or the spine. A person with TB can die if they do not get treatment.

What Are the Symptoms of TB?

The general symptoms of TB disease include feelings of sickness or weakness, weight loss, fever, and night sweats. The symptoms of TB disease of the lungs also include coughing, chest pain, and the coughing up of blood. Symptoms of TB disease in other parts of the body depend on the area affected.

How is TB Spread?

TB germs are put into the air when a person with TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs, sneezes, speaks, or sings. These germs can stay in the air for several hours, depending on the environment. Persons who breathe in the air containing these TB germs can become infected; this is called latent TB infection.

What is the Difference Between Latent TB Infection and TB Disease?

People with *latent TB infection* have TB germs in their bodies, but they are not sick because the germs are not active. These people do not have symptoms of TB disease, and they cannot spread the germs to others. However, they may develop TB disease in the future. They are often prescribed treatment to prevent them from developing TB disease.

People with TB disease are sick from TB germs that are active, meaning that they are multiplying and destroying tissue in their body. They usually have symptoms of TB disease. People with TB disease of the lungs or throat are capable of spreading germs to others. They are prescribed drugs that can treat TB disease.

How Do You Get Tested for TB?

There are two tests that can be used to help detect TB infection: a skin test or a special TB blood test. The Mantoux tuberculin 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. The special TB blood test measures how the patient's immune system reacts to the germs that cause TB.

What Does a Positive Test for TB Infection Mean?

A positive test for TB infection only tells that a person has been infected with TB germs. It does not tell whether or not the person has progressed to TB disease. Other tests, such as a chest x-ray and a sample of sputum, are needed to see whether the person has TB disease.

How is TB Disease Treated?

TB disease can be treated by taking several drugs for 6 to 12 months. It is very important that people who have TB disease finish the medicine, and take the drugs exactly as prescribed. If they stop taking the drugs too soon, they can become sick again; if they do not take the drugs correctly, the germs that are still alive may become resistant to those drugs. TB that is resistant to drugs is harder and more expensive to treat. In some situations, staff of the local health department meet regularly with patients who have TB to watch them take their medications. This is called directly observed therapy (DOT). DOT helps the patient complete treatment in the least amount of time.



For more detailed TB information go to - <http://www.cdc.gov/tb>