



Summit County Public Health

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Confirmed TB Case in Summit County

Jan. 13, 2016 (Akron, Ohio) - Summit County Public Health has confirmed a case of pulmonary tuberculosis in a Summit County resident on Jan. 3, 2017.

In the course of the tuberculosis (TB) investigation, Summit County Public Health works with the individual to identify persons who were potentially exposed and would benefit from evaluation and testing.

Before being diagnosed with TB disease, this individual visited the Akron Children's Hospital neonatal intensive care unit at Summa Akron City Hospital in mid-November through mid-December, 2016. Summit County Public Health shared this information with Summa-Akron City Hospital and Akron Children's Hospital, which operates the neonatal intensive care unit.

Infants who were in the NICU at the Akron Children's Hospital campus were not at risk of exposure.

The three organizations have worked collaboratively to identify approximately 50 families of infants who were patients in the unit during this time and may have been exposed to the disease. Akron Children's has begun notifying these families directly.

"The risk for infection is low, but because TB can be more serious in young children we would like to evaluate these infants and begin them on a protective antibiotic," said Dr. John Bower, a pediatric infectious disease specialist at Akron Children's Hospital. "We have set up a clinic and are providing this care at no cost to our patient families."

In the United States TB disease is an uncommon and potentially serious illness that usually involves the lungs but can affect other parts of the body. In rare cases, people with TB disease can spread the disease to others. TB is spread through the air by close prolonged contact when a person coughs, speaks, laughs, or sings. It is not spread by casual contact or contact with surfaces.

Almost all cases of TB disease are curable with proper treatment and medication. Active cases of TB disease are uncommon, even after exposure. While TB is contagious, it is difficult for the disease to spread from person to person. Therefore, there is minimal risk to the greater public.

“Adult care givers, older children and other individuals who may have visited the unit only during this time period are also encouraged to have a TB test in 6 to 8 weeks to see if they have been infected,” said Dr. Margo Erme, medical director of the Summit County Health Department. “This would be about 10 to 12 weeks after the last potential exposure which is the time for the body to develop its response to the TB bacteria. If testing is done earlier, the person would still need to return in 6-8 weeks to be retested. Testing can be done by their private physician or at Summit County Public Health by calling the Clinic Appointment Line, 330-375-2772.”

For more information, contact Summit County Public Health at (330) 375-2662 Monday – Friday from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm and (330) 283-6380 after hours on weekends or holidays or visit www.scphoh.org.

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