



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Friday March 24 is World Tuberculosis Day**

March 24 is World TB Day, an annual observance meant to draw attention to a disease that causes over 2 million deaths a year worldwide. According to the Centers for Disease Control:

- One-third of the world's population is infected with tuberculosis (TB)
- 9 million people become ill with TB each year
- TB is the leading cause of death among HIV infected individuals
- TB causes more deaths among women than all causes of maternal mortality combined

The Champaign-Urbana Public Health District and the Champaign County Public Health Department are part of a worldwide effort to eradicate tuberculosis. We are working to reduce the incidence of tuberculosis in Champaign County. TB testing is offered every week at our Urbana location (217 N. Broadway), and we work in conjunction with local healthcare agencies to provide follow-up testing and care for clients with active TB. Our nurses also perform TB testing in three local homeless shelters.

Public Health sees a few active cases of tuberculosis per year. In 2005 we performed 1,968 TB tests. Of those, 45 tested positive. Additional testing revealed that 9 of those individuals had active (contagious) TB. CUPHD diligently monitors all clients with active TB to minimize transmission of the disease to others. **Left untreated, one person with active TB can infect 10-15 people per year!**

According to the Centers for Disease Control, TB disproportionately affects racial and ethnic minorities. In 2004, 82% of all reported TB cases in the United States occurred in minorities.

Foreign-born individuals account for 54% of TB cases in the U.S. Here in Champaign County, that percentage is greater, with 66% of our cases being foreign-born.

Symptoms of pulmonary TB include a persistent, phlegm-producing cough that lasts more than three weeks, chest pain, and coughing up blood. Other symptoms include fever, chills, night sweats, loss of appetite, and weight loss.

Only through the vigilance of health authorities everywhere can the disease be checked and, it is hoped, eliminated throughout the world.

Champaign-Urbana Public Health District TB clinics at 217 N. Broadway, Urbana:

Skin Tests: Mondays, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Test results are read the following Wednesday, 8 a.m. – noon and 2 – 4 p.m.

For more information, please contact the Division of Infectious Disease Prevention & Management, (217) 239-7827.

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