



Public Health
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Champaign-Urbana Public Health District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Reminds Residents to Think, Test, and Treat for Tuberculosis

World Tuberculosis Day is March 24

CHAMPAIGN, IL – Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD) joins the global community in commemorating World Tuberculosis (TB) Day on March 24, 2024. This year's theme "Think. Test. Treat TB." emphasizes the critical steps of considering one's chance for TB infection, getting tested, and ensuring timely treatment for those affected.

Despite advancements in healthcare, TB remains a global health threat and continues to be a concern in the United States and Champaign County. Over 13 million people in the U.S. are estimated to have inactive, or latent, TB infection, and there are over 8,000 cases of active TB each year. Eighty percent of those active cases arise from reactivated latent TB. In 2023, Champaign County investigated a total of 169 TB cases with over 95% identified as latent TB. The key to eliminating the threat of TB is screening for and treating latent TB.

Those at higher risk for tuberculosis infection for which testing is recommended include:

- People born in or who frequently travel to countries where TB is common, including those in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.
- Those who live or used to live in large group settings where TB is more common, such as homeless shelters, prisons, or jails.
- People who have recently spent time with someone with active TB disease.
- People who work in places with high risk for TB transmission, such as hospitals, homeless shelters, correctional facilities, and nursing homes.

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It is recommended that that people discuss with their healthcare providers whether tuberculosis testing and treatment are appropriate for them. People with a weaker immune system because of certain medications or health conditions such as diabetes, cancer, or HIV are at higher risk of progressing to active TB if infected.

Treating latent TB benefits both the general public and the individual. Without treatment, one in 10 people will develop active TB in their lifetime, with the chances higher for those in vulnerable populations. When a person develops active TB, the symptoms may be mild for many months which can lead to delays in seeking care and transmission of the bacteria to others. Individuals ill with TB have the potential to transmit the infection to approximately 10-15 other individuals through close proximity within a year. With testing and treatment however, TB is preventable and curable.

Champaign-Urbana Public Health Districts remains committed in its efforts to end TB, ensuring equitable access to TB services, and building a healthier, more resilient community.

For more information visit <https://www.cdc.gov/tb/default.htm>

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