



SOLANO COUNTY

County Administrator's Office

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sacramento, Solano Health Officials Work with Local Hospitals on TB Case

SOLANO COUNTY – Sacramento and Solano County public health agencies are working with NorthBay Medical Center in Fairfield and Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento to investigate potential exposures to an individual with active tuberculosis (TB) who spent time in both facilities.

The Solano County resident is currently isolated and receiving treatment to prevent the spread of TB.

Health officials are working with both medical centers, in consultation with California Department of Public Health, to assess patients, visitors, and staff to determine who may have been exposed to the TB germ. There were periods of exposure in the Sacramento neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) from March 14-March 31 and the Fairfield NICU from March 31 to April 2 and from April 11 to April 19 of 2012. Parents of exposed babies will be contacted within 24 hours, while others potentially exposed will be contacted within the next few days.

In accordance with State and Federal laws that protect patient confidentiality, no specific information about the individual with active TB will be released.

“From the medical evidence we have reviewed so far, we believe that the risk of infection with TB in this particular case is low,” said Michael Stacey, MD, Chief Medical Officer for Solano County. “We will take the necessary measures to ensure that all those with significant levels of exposure are tested and, if necessary, treated with antibiotics.”

Contact investigations, like this one currently under way, are an important step in stopping the spread of TB. Patients, visitors or staff determined to have TB *infection* will be given medication to prevent progression to TB *disease*.

“Although it may be a new experience for the patients, visitors and staff to the NICU, contact investigations are a regular activity for Solano Public Health and Sacramento County Public

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Health TB Program staff, who receive new active TB disease cases regularly each month. TB is preventable and curable,” said Olivia Kasirye, MD, MS, Health Officer for Sacramento County.

For general TB information, visit www.cdc.gov/tb/. During business hours, Solano County residents with questions can call Solano Public Health at 707-784-8600. Sacramento County residents can contact Sacramento County Public Health at 916-875-5881.

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EDITORS: ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Tuberculosis (TB) is a serious, treatable, and slow-growing bacterial lung disease. It is transmitted person-to-person through microscopic droplets that enter the air while coughing, sneezing, talking or singing. The most common way to become infected with TB germs is by spending a lot of time in enclosed air spaces with a person who has active TB disease.

TB is a disease that, by law, must be reported to the local Public Health Department. Upon notification of the TB disease diagnosis, public health nurses act immediately working with the patient and family members to list all of the places they have spent time and all people with whom they have been in close contact. Public health staff will identify and test individuals who may have come in contact with the TB germ. Infection with TB can occur with prolonged indoor contact in an enclosed air space with the person who has active TB.

There is a difference between TB *infection* and active TB *disease*. Most people who test positive for TB have TB *infection*.

People with TB *infection*:

- Do not have disease and are not sick because the germ is *inactive*
- Do have the TB germ in their body
- Cannot spread the germ to others
- Over their lifetime, adults with TB infection have about a 10% risk of developing active TB disease if untreated. The risk of developing active TB is much higher in infants and immunocompromised persons.

People with Active TB *disease*:

- Develop active TB from untreated TB infection
- Are ill from the germs that are *active* in their body
- May cough a lot, feel weak, have a fever, lose weight, cough up blood, or sweat a lot at night
- Are contagious and are capable of giving the infection to others, until they are treated, have repeated tests, and are cleared for public contact by a doctor
- Can be treated and cured.

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