



Robin Cox, MPH  
Health Education Manager  
Public Health Public Information Officer  
Health Promotion and Education Bureau

Ronald W. Chapman, MD, MPH  
Health Officer/Deputy Director

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ronald W. Chapman, MD, MPH, Health Officer/Deputy Director, 784-8600  
Michael Stacey, MD, Deputy Health Officer, TB Controller, 784-8600  
Robin Cox, MPH, CPH, 784-8611  
Martha Lacy, Principal, David A. Weir Elementary School, 399-3300

SOLANO PUBLIC HEALTH AND DAVID A. WEIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
RESPOND TO ACTIVE TUBERCULOSIS CASE

Solano County Public Health has confirmed that an individual associated with David A. Weir Elementary School has active tuberculosis (TB). With the full support of David Weir Elementary School officials and the Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District, Solano Public Health staff are assessing all students and staff to determine who has had prolonged close indoor contact with this person. In order to protect patient confidentiality, no specific information about the patient will be released by Solano Public Health.

“Our number one priority is to ensure the health and safety of the staff and students at David Weir Elementary. We want to reassure parents that there is no longer a risk of infection with TB from the individual identified as having active TB, and we encourage parents to send their children to school at David Weir,” said Ronald W. Chapman, MD, MPH, Solano County Public Health Officer.

“From the medical evidence we have reviewed, we have determined that the risk of spread of TB in this particular case is very low. However, it is important that we evaluate anyone who has had prolonged close contact in enclosed air space with this person. We will skin test those with close contact, and if necessary, provide treatment with antibiotics to prevent potential progression towards the development of active TB disease,” said Michael Stacey, MD, Deputy Health Officer and TB Controller for Solano County Health and Social Services.

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275 Beck Avenue, P.O. Box 4090, MS 5-240, Fairfield, CA 94533-6804, tel 707 784 8600, fax 707 421 6618

PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION



Health and Social Services Department

Solano Public Health and school administration officials have initially identified approximately 50 people as contacts who need to be skin tested for the TB germ. All staff and parents will be mailed a letter today from Solano Public Health, which will state whether or not they/their child has been identified as a person needing to be tested by Public Health nurses next Tuesday, February 16 at the school site.

Testing is a two step process, and the tests conducted on Tuesday (Feb. 16) will be “read” for results by a public health nurse on Thursday (Feb. 18) or Friday (Feb. 19). After conducting the first round of testing, if there is any evidence of transmission of the TB germ from person-to-person, more testing will be conducted.

“David Weir Elementary School is cooperating 100 percent with Solano Public Health,” said Martha Lacy, David Weir Principal. “Most importantly, I want to assure our parents and families that Solano County Public Health has verified that there is no longer a risk of infection from the individual with active TB and encourages parents to continue sending your children to school,” said Lacy.

There will be an informational meeting, including a question and answer period, for students, parents, school staff and the public at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, February 10, in the multi-purpose room at David Weir Elementary, 1975 Pennsylvania Avenue, Fairfield.

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, Solano Public Health nurses acted immediately to begin a thorough contact investigation, starting with the patient and his/her immediate family and close friends.

“Our public health nurses work with the patient and family members to list all of the places they have spent time and all of people with whom they have been in close contact. We find out specific details about where the person with active TB lives, learns, works, plays and worships,” explained Dr. Stacey. “Working like detectives with this information, Public Health staff will track down and test individuals who are significant ‘contacts’ in any locations where they may have been in significant indoor contact with the person who has active TB disease.”

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“There is a difference between TB *infection* and active TB *disease*,” explained Dr. Stacey. 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, have about a 10% risk of developing active TB disease.

People with Active TB *disease*:

- 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.

Contact investigations, like this one currently under way, are an important step in stopping the spread of TB. Any students and 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 students, parents and school staff involved, contact investigations are a regular activity for Solano Public Health TB Program staff, who receive an average of two to three new active TB disease cases per month.

For more information visit [www.solanocounty.com/PublicHealth](http://www.solanocounty.com/PublicHealth) or [www.cdc.gov/tb/default.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tb/default.htm). For urgent issues regarding TB exposure, callers can leave their name, number and question for Public Health at 784-8076 and a Public Health representative will contact them.

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