

Tuberculosis Control Program

325 Ninth Avenue, Box 359776
Seattle, WA 98104-2420

206-744-4579 Fax 206-744-4350
TTY Relay: 711

www.kingcounty.gov/health

Health Advisory - Increased Tuberculosis Among Pacific Islander Communities

Action Requested:

- *Hospitals and clinics:* Please distribute to primary care providers, emergency and urgent care providers, pulmonologists, and infectious disease specialists.
- *Health care providers:*
 - Consider tuberculosis (TB) in adult and pediatric patients with compatible clinical symptoms such as cough that lasts 2-3 weeks or longer, unexplained weight loss, fever, night sweats and/or abnormal radiographic findings.
 - Exercise higher consideration for TB in patients from Pacific Islander (PI) communities, including persons born in the Pacific Islands or the U.S. (Pacific Island regions include Federated States of Micronesia and Republic of the Marshall Islands).
 - For patients with compatible symptoms from PI communities, perform the following steps to rule out TB disease:
 - Physical exam
 - Chest x-ray
 - IGRA (i.e., QuantiFERON or T-SPOT)
 - If radiographic findings of the chest images (chest x-ray and/or chest CT) are suggestive of TB disease, collect 3 sputum samples on three different days, ideally first in the morning.
 - **Report suspected or confirmed cases of active TB, particularly before initiating TB treatment, to the county health department within 24 hours. King County TB reporting line is 206-744-4579, option 2.** Both pulmonary TB and extrapulmonary TB disease are reportable. Do not wait for culture confirmation to report the case.

Background: The Pacific Northwest has been experiencing higher than normal diagnoses of TB disease among people from Pacific Islander communities in recent years. On average, 5 cases of TB disease are diagnosed in Washington each week and an estimated 200,000 people in Washington are infected and at risk of developing disease.

Be aware of persons with increased risk of infection or developing TB disease, including:

- Close contacts of a person with active TB disease
- Persons who have history of residence or travel to a place with an elevated TB rate. This includes any country other than the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, or a country in western or northern Europe (Refer to table below for TB-endemic countries and territories).
- Children younger than 5 years of age who have a positive TB test
- Persons who have a history of latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI), especially those who were in contact with patients with active TB within the past 2 years
- Persons who have lived or worked in a shelter, correctional facility, long-term care facility or other congregate setting
- Persons with HIV
- Persons with diabetes mellitus
- Persons who are immunocompromised

TB-endemic countries and territories based on 2019 incidence per 100,000 population (adapted from WHO global list of high burden countries for TB, TB/HIV, and MDR/RR-TB), 2021-2025):

Incidence Category	Countries Included, by WHO Region
Severely endemic (≥500 new and relapse cases per 100 000 population per year)	<p><u>Africa:</u> Central African Republic, Gabon, Lesotho, South Africa</p> <p><u>South-East Asia:</u> Democratic People's Republic of Korea</p> <p><u>Western Pacific:</u> Philippines</p>
Highly endemic (300–499 new and relapse cases per 100 000 population per year)	<p><u>Africa:</u> Angola, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia</p> <p><u>South-East Asia:</u> Indonesia, Myanmar, Timor-Leste</p> <p><u>Western Pacific:</u> Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea</p>
Endemic (100–299 new and relapse cases per 100 000 population per year)	<p><u>Africa:</u> Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zimbabwe</p> <p><u>Americas:</u> Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Haiti, Peru</p> <p><u>Eastern Mediterranean:</u> Afghanistan, Djibouti, Pakistan, Somalia</p> <p><u>Europe:</u> Greenland, Kyrgyzstan</p> <p><u>South-East Asia:</u> Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Thailand</p> <p><u>Western Pacific:</u> Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Northern Mariana Islands, Tuvalu, Viet Nam</p>

Resources:

- King County Tuberculosis Control Program: [Tuberculosis \(TB\) Control Program - King County, Washington](#)
- WA DOH Tuberculosis Resources for Health Care Providers: <https://doh.wa.gov/you-and-your-family/illness-and-disease-z/tuberculosis-tb/healthcare-providers>
- WA DOH TB Surveillance: <https://doh.wa.gov/data-and-statistical-reports/diseases-and-chronic-conditions/tuberculosis-data-and-reports>
- WA Local Health Jurisdictions (LHJs) Contact Information: <https://doh.wa.gov/about-us/washingtons-public-health-system/washington-state-local-health-jurisdictions>
- CDC Tuberculosis Tools for Health Care Providers: https://www.cdc.gov/tb/education/provider_edmaterials.htm
- National TB Statistics and Surveillance Data: <https://www.cdc.gov/tb/statistics/default.htm>
- WHO Global Lists WHO Global Lists of High Burden Countries for Tuberculosis (TB), TB/HIV and Multidrug/Rifampicin-resistant TB (MDR/RR-TB), 2021–2025: https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/hq-tuberculosis/who_globalhbcliststb_2021-2025_backgrounddocument.pdf?sfvrsn=f6b854c2_9