Tuberculosis (TB) Screening for Daycare Settings

Tuberculosis (TB) is a disease spread through the air by activities like coughing and singing. Although it can affect many different parts of the body, TB most often affects the lungs. TB can also live in the body for many years without causing any symptoms (latent TB infection). People with latent TB infection can receive medication so that they will not develop active TB disease, which can be spread to others.

Children can catch TB easily from adults, although children seldom spread it to others. To protect young children from TB infection, the City of Hamilton Public Health Services recommends **Tuberculosis (TB) screening for all staff, students, and volunteers working in a daycare setting.** TB screening identifies individuals infected with TB. People infected with TB may receive free treatment to prevent or cure TB. The TB skin test (TST) is one way to check if a person has TB infection.

For all recommendations, a **TST or medical assessment should be performed during the 6 months before hire/placement or within 2 weeks of hire/placement as long as the person has no symptoms of active TB disease** (see below).

**Recommendations for Staff, Volunteers and Students Completing Placement (e.g. early childhood education students):**

- A single TB skin test (TST), regardless of BCG status, is recommended for individuals who have never received a TB skin test before or don’t know their TST status.

- A single TST is recommended for individuals who have had a previously documented negative TB skin test (< 10 mm for healthy individuals).

- A TST is not needed for individuals with a documented positive TST or a history of TB infection or disease. These individuals require an assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner to rule out active disease.

- Individuals who have had a severe blistering TST reaction in the past, or have extensive burns or eczema present over the TST testing sites, SHOULD NOT receive a TST. These people require an assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner to rule out active disease.

- Individuals with a positive TB skin test should know and monitor for the symptoms of active TB disease (cough, fever, night sweats, decreased appetite, and weight loss). If symptoms develop they should see a health care provider right away. They should not work until the symptoms are assessed by a physician or a nurse practitioner.

Yearly TB skin tests are not recommended.

An annual CXR is not recommended for those with a positive TST.

**NEW Children Attending Daycare**

TB screening is **not routinely recommended** for children attending a daycare setting.

For questions regarding TB screening in all settings, please call the Infectious Disease and TB Control Program at 905-540-6636, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.  

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