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## Ambulatory TB Exposure Communication

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From Becerra-Ortiz, Ivette <Ivette.Becerra-Ortiz@ucsf.edu>

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To Becerra-Ortiz, Ivette <Ivette.Becerra-Ortiz@ucsf.edu>

Dear Colleagues,

There is a large [tuberculosis \(TB\) outbreak at Archbishop Riordan High School in San Francisco](#).

As a result, the San Francisco Department of Health (SFPD) is conducting a large-scale TB investigation involving many Archbishop Riordan High School students and staff. To date, there are 3 confirmed active (infectious) TB cases and >50 cases of latent (non-infectious) TB associated with this outbreak.

To support the public health response to this outbreak, UCSF has launched a multidisciplinary response that includes ambulatory and Hospital Epidemiology and Infection Prevention (HEIP) input to help ensure our clinical teams have the information they need to safely and effectively support patients requesting services related to this outbreak. This is a dynamic and evolving public health response, and we expect our response will evolve as the outbreak investigation unfolds.

As UCSF ambulatory services can expect an influx of patients who have questions about TB screening, it will be important for you to know common TB symptoms, what steps to take, and what resources are available to support impacted patients and families.

### **What are common TB symptoms?**

The most common symptoms associated with TB include cough lasting > 3 weeks, coughing up blood (hemoptysis), fever, fatigue, unintentional weight loss or concerns about appropriate growth and development, and night sweats.

### **Are patients with TB exposure infectious?**

Although patients in Archbishop Riordan High School cluster were potentially exposed to TB, it does not necessarily mean they are infected. The additional screening these patients are having will determine if a patient has not been infected, has latent TB (which is not contagious), or has active TB (contagious).

### **How will these TB exposed patients be screened?**

TB exposed patients should be screened for symptoms associated with TB, ideally via My Chart and/or virtual visit. This is important so that potentially infectious patients can be seen using workflows that minimize risk to other patients, visitors and healthcare personnel.

While patients associated with the outbreak should have documentation from SFPD, the approach to screening for potential exposure should be used for all patients requesting evaluation for possible TB exposure.

There are multiple options for seeking virtual care at UCSF Health. The most convenient and timely option for patients with a UCSF MyChart account is UCSF Express Care, our on-demand video visit service. Patients may also schedule a video visit with their UCSF primary care provider if an appointment is available at a date and time that works for them. Urgent Care at UCSF Health also offers

same-day and next day video visits by appointment for patients that would like to schedule a virtual visit but are not established with a UCSF PCP.

Information about how to access Express Care on-demand virtual services can be found here:

<https://www.ucsfhealth.org/mychart/express-care-video-visits>

Information about scheduling an appointment with Urgent Care can be found here:

<https://www.ucsfhealth.org/list-of-clinics/urgent-care>

Generally, in addition to TB symptom screening, blood testing for TB infection (Quantiferon) will be part of the follow-up. We have developed an [UCSF TB Exposure Assessment algorithm](#) that reflects current SFDPH screening recommendations in collaboration with HEIP and are working with APeX team on standard screening documentation which should be available next week.

### **When should I be concerned for active TB?**

If the exposed patient has TB symptoms and/or a CXR with abnormalities that can be seen with TB, they need additional evaluation for active TB. As detailed in the [UCSF TB Exposure Assessment Algorithm](#), it is important that we carefully manage patients with possible active TB both within our facilities and in partnership with the SFDPH.

For any patient where you are concerned about possible active TB, we request that clinicians:

- Contact [HEIP](#) Hospital Epidemiology and Infection Prevention so that they can add a 'TB Airborne Isolation' flag added to the patient's chart and follow the steps noted in the algorithm to safely care for the patient
- Refer the patient immediately for additional clinical evaluation and possible treatment.
  - If ambulatory assessment is clinically appropriate, contact SFDPH TB Clinic at 628-206-3398.
  - For patients who are clinically unstable, the evaluation can be completed during a hospital admission. UCSF Pediatric and Adult Infectious Diseases should be consulted to support the evaluation and care.
- All patients with suspected active TB must be reported to [patient to SFDPH](#) within 1 business day.

### **Where can I learn more about TB including latent TB therapy?**

Like all such outbreaks, we anticipate the recommendations from the SFDPH will continue to evolve in response to the investigation. We are in close communication with SFDPH and are coordinating our response with other health care systems in San Francisco.

These are other helpful resources:

-[UCSF HEIP Contact Information](#)

-[UCSF TB Resources](#) including the [UCSF TB Exposure Assessment algorithm](#)

-[SFDPH Health Advisory: TB Outbreak at a Local High School- clinical evaluation and reporting 1/29/26](#)

[SFDPH Tuberculosis: evaluation and treatment of TB-exposed adolescents webinar 1/5/26](#)

-[SFDPH TB Information for the General Public 2/5/26](#)

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