

HEALTH ADVISORY

Tuberculosis and Food
Establishments

Since 1984, the number of TB cases in the United States began to increase. This increase has continued and is of concern to public health officials. It is important that food establishment operators and owners understand the manner in which TB is spread among workers and the disease's symptoms.

What is TB and How is it Spread?

Tuberculosis, or TB, is a disease caused by a bacteria that can attack any part of your body, but they usually attack the lungs. TB disease was once the leading cause of death in the United States. TB is spread through the air from one person to another.

CONTINUOUS

The bacteria are put into the air when a person with TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs or sneezes. People nearby may breathe in these bacteria and become infected. People with TB disease are most likely to spread it to people they spend time with every day. This includes family members, friends, and coworkers.

In food establishments it is spread among food handlers when a TB infected food worker coughs or sneezes, releasing the TB bacteria into the air. Nearby food workers breathe in these bacteria and become infected. **TB cannot be spread by food in a food establishment. The TB bacteria dies when it comes in contact with food.**

What is TB Infection?

In most people who breathe in TB bacteria and become infected, the body is able to stop the bacteria from growing. The bacteria become inactive, but remain alive in the body and can become active later. This is called TB infection.

CONTINUOUS

People with TB infection have no symptoms, don't feel sick, can't spread TB to others, but can develop TB disease later in life without receiving preventive therapy.

Continuous

When TB bacteria become active and the disease develops in the body following symptoms may be present: a bad cough that lasts longer than 2 weeks; pain in the chest; coughing up blood or sputum; weakness or fatigue; weight loss; no appetite; chills and fever; and/or sweating at night.

CONTINUOUS

Should you or your coworkers show any of the symptoms of TB disease they should be tested as soon as possible and be treated if the test results are positive.

Where Do I or My Employees go for Testing and Treatment?

The Department of Health Services, Public Health Programs and Services, offers free testing and treatment to all persons residing in Los Angeles County.

CONTINUOUS

Contact the nearest Public Health Center listed on the back of this advisory for information about the days and times the TB Clinics are open for testing and treatment. For additional information regarding tuberculosis, call TB Control at (213) 744-6160.

CFH Training Outline

Date: June 25, 1998

Certified Food Handler Program
Environmental Health Public
Health Programs & Services
Department of Health Services
County of Los Angeles.

**Subject: TUBERCULOSIS TRAINING FOR CERTIFIED
FOOD HANDLERS**

Title: Controlling Tuberculosis in Food Service

1. Introduction	Discuss background and public health significance of TB
2. How is TB Spread?	Discuss mode of transmission. Emphasize the TB is not spread by food.
3. What is TB Infection?	Define infection and characteristics of an infection
4. TB Symptoms	Discuss TB symptoms
5. Testing and Treatment of Employees	Explain that anyone can be tested and treated for TB free in Los Angeles County. Explain that they must contact a Public Health Centers for an appointment.

Duration: 5 to 15 minutes.

Controlling Tuberculosis in Food Service

Department of Health Services

Health Protection & Disease Control

and

Environmental Health

Certified Food Handlers Program

Introduction

- Tuberculosis, or TB, is a disease caused by a bacteria which can attack any part of your body, but usually targets the lungs.
- Tb was once the leading cause of death in the United States and began to disappear; however, TB has come back. More than 23,000 cases were reported in 1993.

What is Tuberculosis (TB)?

- TB bacteria can destroy the lungs
- Death results when the TB bacteria causes sufficient damage to the lungs to destroy them.

How is TB Spread?

- TB is spread through the air from a person with an active infection to another.
- The TB bacteria are put in the air when a person with active case of TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs or sneezes. People nearby may breathe in these bacteria and become infected.

How is TB Spread? (Con't)

- People with an active case of TB disease are most likely to spread it to people they spend the most time with every day. This includes family members, friends, and coworkers.
- ***TB IS NOT SPREAD BY FOOD***
- ***TB IS NOT SPREAD BY PERSONS WITH AN INACTIVE TB INFECTION***

What Is TB Infection?

- Generally, the airborne TB bacteria is breathed into the lungs. People then become infected. However, the body is able to fight the bacteria to stop them from growing. **The bacteria become inactive**, but remain alive in the body and can become active later. ***This is called TB infection.***

What Is TB Infection? (Con't)

Many people who have the TB infection never develop the TB disease.

How can a food service manager tell if an employee may have active TB?

An employee with the following symptoms should be checked for TB:

- A bad cough that lasts longer than 2 weeks
- Pain in the chest
- Coughing up blood or sputum

TB Symptoms (Con't)

- Weakness or fatigue
- Weight loss
- Loss of appetite
- Chills
- Fever
- Severe night sweats

How Can I or My Employees Get Tested for TB?

- Make an appointment at any Public Health Center operated by the Department of Health Services, County of Los Angeles.
- **ALL TB TESTING AND TREATMENT IS FREE!!!!**

CERTIFIED FOOD HANDLER PROGRAM

- LOS ANGELES COUNTY –
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMS &
SERVICES HEALTH PROTECTION &
DISEASE CONTROL

PUBLIC HEALTH CENTERS

THE COUNTY OFFERS COMPLETE TB TESTING AND TREATMENT AT NO COST TO ALL RESIDENTS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY.

- Central Health Center

241 N. Figueroa Street

Los Angeles

(213)240-8203

- Pomona Health Center

750 Park Avenue

Pomona

(909)868-0235

- **Glendale Health Center**

501 N. Glendale Avenue
Glendale
(818)500-5762

- **South Health Center**

1522 E. 102nd Street
Los Angeles
(213)563-4055

- **Hollywood-Wilshire Health Center**

5205 Melrose Avenue
Los Angeles
(213)871-4311

- **Torrance Health Center**

2300 W. Carson Street
Torrance
(310)222-6571

- **Monrovia Health Center**
330 W. Maple Avenue
Los Angeles
(818)301-4003

- **Pacoima Health Center**
13300 Van Nuys Blvd
Pacoima
(818)896-1903

- **Curtis Tucker Health Center**
123 W. Manchester Blvd.
Inglewood
(310)419-5325

- **Whittier Health Center**
7643 S. Painter Avenue
Whittier
(562)907-3230

For more information about services or clinic days and times, call the Public Health Center nearest you.

For information regarding tuberculosis, call TB Control at **(213)744-6160.**