



EDDIE BAZA CALVO
GOVERNOR

RAY TENORIO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT OF GUAM
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
DIPATTAMENTON SALUT PUPBLEKO YAN SETBISION SUSIAT

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JAMES W. GILLAN
DIRECTOR

LEO G. CASIL
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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The Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) in collaboration with the Guam Department of Education are working to identify all close contacts to an active case of tuberculosis (TB) at Vicente S.A. Benavente Middle School. All identified contacts will be notified by letter and provided information regarding the date of the TB screening.

Mycobacterium tuberculosis, the bacteria causing tuberculosis, is carried through the air in infectious droplet nuclei too small for the naked eye (small air-borne particles less than 5 microns in size) which are produced when persons with tuberculosis of the lung or larynx sneeze, cough, speak or sing. People cannot get infected with TB bacteria through handshakes, sitting on toilet seats, or sharing dishes and utensils with someone who has TB disease.


Persons exhibiting symptoms of the disease such as a bad cough that lasts longer than two weeks, coughing up bloody sputum, weakness or fatigue, chills, weight loss, no appetite, fever and night sweats should contact their physician.

Exposure to TB does not result in TB disease immediately, unlike other communicable diseases such as Measles, Mumps, and Pertussis. It takes anywhere from 2 – 12 weeks in order to see evidence of TB infection as shown by a positive TB skin test reaction. Most people who get exposed to TB might be able to keep the infection inactive or latent. However, children below the age of 5 years, people with Diabetes, or other immunosuppressive conditions may not be able to keep the infection under control and are at higher risk of developing active TB disease within a few months or 1-2 years after the exposure.

The TB (PPD) skin test will be provided for free on March 07, 2017, from 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., to all identified contacts at Vicente S.A. Benavente Middle School.

All employee and student contacts who do not submit their TB skin test result by **March 10, 2017**, will be excluded from work or school. This exclusion is necessary to ensure that all affected employees and students receive the required test and do not have active TB. The required TB skin test can also be obtained through a private clinic of their choice; however, the results of the test must be submitted to the school by March 10, 2017, in order to avoid exclusion.

For more information, please contact Gloria Mendiola, Tuberculosis Program Manager or Alice Cuenca, CDC Coordinator II, with the Bureau of Communicable Disease Control at 735-3602/7131/7145/7120.


JAMES W. GILLAN
Director