



GOVERNMENT OF GUAM

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



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TB Screening at GMH for Contacts to Active TB Case

On Thursday, August 24th the Guam Memorial Hospital (GMH) in collaboration with the Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) began screening babies identified as contacts to the active case of tuberculosis (TB) diagnosed in an employee of GMH who worked in the Nursery. Of the total 311 babies exposed during the period of April 1, 2017 to August 8, 2017, 52 were screened. No evidence of TB was detected in any of the babies.

GMH staff has attempted to reach all 311 families of the babies based on telephone numbers listed on the medical record. Not all families have been reached to date yet efforts continue. DPHSS will send out letters to contacts whose telephone numbers were either not in service or otherwise could not be contacted by telephone. For parents whose contact number(s) have changed, please call the GMH switchboard at 647-2552 – 4 to verify if their baby is on the list of contacts who need to be screened.


Exposure to TB does not result in TB disease immediately unlike in the case of other communicable diseases such as measles, mumps etc. It takes anywhere from 2-12 weeks to see evidence of TB infection as shown by a positive PPD skin test reaction. A baby less than 6 month of age should undergo a chest x-ray regardless of the PPD skin test result since a PPD at this age would most likely be negative.

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 tuberculosis within a few months up to 2 years after the exposure. Close monitoring of all exposed individuals particularly newborns, for any sign of active TB is recommended.

Signs and symptoms of active TB in an infant include:

- Cough;
- Feelings of sickness or weakness, lethargy, and/or reduced playfulness;
- Weight loss or failure to thrive;
- Fever; and/or
- Night sweats.

For information regarding appointment scheduling for baby contacts, please call the GMH switchboard at 647-2552/3/4. For general information on TB, please call the TB Control Program at 735-7131/7145 or go to www.cdc.gov/tb.


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