

Sample Letter From the Health Departments to Emergency Room Personnel

Public Health Department

Address

Date

Dear Colleagues:

Notification:

Recently, there have been several confirmed cases of people with tuberculosis in your area. Physicians play a critical role in the prompt reporting of communicable diseases and can make the difference between disease control and an outbreak. When evaluating patients in your facility, please be aware of the following symptoms of TB and those groups that are at increased risk.

Symptoms of TB may include:

- Persistent cough (>3 weeks)
- Hemoptysis
- Night sweats
- Unexplained weight loss
- Anorexia
- Fatigue
- Fever
- Chills
- Recurrent or persistent pneumonia
- Adenopathy with or without drainage

Groups at increased risk of TB include:

- Contacts of persons with confirmed or suspected pulmonary tuberculosis (e.g., household and work environments)
- Persons who have immigrated from countries where TB is endemic (or where there is a high incidence of TB), especially those persons who have recently immigrated (\leq five years)
- Members of some medically underserved, low-income populations
- Members of high-risk racial or ethnic minority populations, as defined locally
- Residents or employees of high-risk congregate settings (e.g., correctional institutions, long-term residential facilities and homeless shelters)
- Health care workers serving high-risk clients
- Infants, children and adolescents exposed to adults in high-risk categories
- Homeless individuals
- Persons infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)

- Persons injecting illicit drugs or locally identified as high-risk substance users (e.g., crack cocaine users)
- Cigarette smokers
- Known to have a condition increasing the risk of disease if infection occurs (e.g., organ transplant, significant immunodeficiency)
- Findings of meningitis in a person from a TB-endemic area

Should any person be identified as a tuberculosis suspect, implement isolation as outlined in the facility's Infection Control Plan and notify the health department.

For further information on tuberculosis reporting, please contact your local health department. Another resource is the [Tuberculosis Management Resources for the Emergency Department](#) which is published on the [Mayo Clinic Center for Tuberculosis website](#). This resource also provides [reporting forms and contact information](#).

We thank your personnel and physicians for their ongoing efforts in reporting and controlling communicable diseases.

Sincerely,