



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Kings County Health Department

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World TB Day - March 24th

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Dear Colleague,

“One third of the world’s population is estimated to be living with Tuberculosis (TB) infection,” according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The World Health Organization (WHO) states, TB disease will kill more people than any other infectious disease this year.

California is responsible for 20% of the TB in the United States (US), with about 2,000 new TB disease cases diagnosed in California each year and about 200 deaths. On average, we see 2-6 active cases per year in Kings County, with some years being higher.

About 2.4 million people in California are estimated to have asymptomatic latent TB infection (LTBI) and most of them do not know it. Testing and treatment for latent TB cases is paramount in reducing the threat here in our state. The California Department of Public Health is working with local health departments, health care providers and community based agencies to intensify efforts to find and treat latent TB infection before it becomes active disease.

Anyone born or has lived outside of the US should be tested. One in five tested will be positive. Anyone in contact with a known TB case should be tested, and anyone with a weakened immune system or contemplating an immunocompromising therapy should be tested.

Providers are encouraged to call the Kings County Public Health before starting LTBI treatment, as most times the person already has been seen by us. Also, we could update you on the latest treatment options and recommendations. Patients can be referred to us for treatment if needed.

Theoretically, we could eliminate TB from planet earth. We have accurate testing to diagnose it and effective antibiotics to eradicate it. But, with the current level of resources dedicated to this world wide, it is still expected that more people will die this year from TB than from any other infectious disease.

Because one in 17 people in California are infected with TB, we need to do our part locally by testing and treating LTBI.

Thanks for helping us to eradicate this disease,

Milton Teske, MD
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