

Children with Positive TB Skin Tests

Your child has been found to have a positive skin test for tuberculosis (TB). Your child's chest x-ray shows no evidence of TB disease at this time. Your child has no physical findings to suggest TB disease. The positive TB skin test means your child is infected with the TB germ, but it hasn't caused illness. Your child may need medications for an extended length of time (to be determined by a doctor who specialized in the diagnosis and treatment of TB) to treat the infection and to prevent your child from getting sick from the TB disease.

Where did you child get TB infection?

Children who have TB infection were exposed to a person with active TB disease in their lung. It is critical the source of your child's TB germ be found as soon as possible to prevent others from getting sick. The public health nurse will determine who needs to be tested. Testing will be done at the local health department at no cost. People who have positive skin tests or have symptoms of TB will need to have a chest x-ray and 3 sputums collected to determine if they have active TB.

Babies and children with tuberculosis infection will be placed on Directly Observed Preventive Therapy (DOPT). DOPT means the health department representative will meet the parent and child at a designated time and place convenient for both. The parent will give the child the medication and the health department representative will observe that the child has swallowed the medication(s).

To give the medications do the following:

- Crush pills or open capsules
- Put the contents into a small amount of something sweet and thick, such as chocolate pudding, applesauce, banana baby food, jam or anything your child likes.
- Some families find that giving the medicine in the evening works better if children have problems taking them earlier in the day.

Some of the side effects associated with TB medicine:

- Numbness or tingling of the fingers and toes sometimes occurs. Let us know if this happens.
- Allergic reactions – Call the local county health department nurse if a rash develops.
- There is a very small risk of hepatitis (liver inflammation) with INH. This is extremely rare in children.

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Report immediately, if your child has a few days of loss of appetite, low energy, vomiting or belly pain, yellowing of eyes or skin call the health department nurse.

Plan for follow-up: Every month you will need to come back to the health department for a symptom review, weight, and exam.

Contact: _____ County Health Department
_____ Phone

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