



**Riverside
University**
HEALTH SYSTEM
Public Health



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Tahquitz High School student diagnosed with active tuberculosis; officials urge TB testing for some students and staff

A student at Tahquitz High School in Hemet has been diagnosed with active tuberculosis. Riverside County health officials are working with school representatives to identify students and staff who might have been exposed to the illness (disease).

The student is receiving treatment and is expected to recover and will not return to school until a medical clearance is issued. The student is not being identified due to confidentiality requirements.

Riverside County health officials are sending out letters to the families of about 300 students who might have been exposed to this illness. The school will notify staff members who might have been exposed.

As a precautionary measure, the health department is recommending that anyone who receives the notice be screened with a free TB skin test at a clinic being planned later this month at Tahquitz High School. Those who receive the notification letter can also opt to be tested by their own health care provider at their own expense. If the skin test reads positive, the individual will get a chest x-ray and follow-up with an appropriate provider. The x-ray will help determine whether an individual might simply have been exposed to the illness rather than have active TB.

TB testing is only recommended for those who receive notification.

Riverside County Public Health Officer Dr. Cameron Kaiser emphasized the risk of transmission is low.

“While the risk of infection is slight, it is important that those who are notified take the time to get tested,” Kaiser said. “The testing is simple, doesn’t take much time, and can provide peace of mind.”

Hemet Unified School District officials have planned a meeting at 6 p.m. Thursday (Aug. 10) at Tahquitz High School for parents who may have questions or concerns about TB. Health officials also will attend.

“The safety and well-being of our students and staff is of utmost importance and we are thankful for the attention to detail the Department of Public Health and our staff have provided in this incident to ensure the safety of our community,” said Superintendent Christi Barrett.

Tuberculosis is a disease spread through the air during prolonged close contact with an individual with active tuberculosis. People may contract TB when breathing air exhaled by someone who is sick with TB. When left untreated, TB can result in complications that can be serious.

TB is not spread by shaking hands, sharing food or drink, or via bed linens or toilet seats. Not everyone infected with TB bacteria becomes sick. A person with inactive (latent) TB cannot spread it to others.