

Frequently asked questions about tuberculosis (TB)

How is TB transmitted?

The Broome County Health Department indicates that transmission of TB is associated with close and prolonged contact and is uncommon among brief and casual contacts.

Who is being screened for TB and how are they being notified?

The Broome County Health Department and DSHSC are communicating with a specific group of individuals who have been identified as close contacts based on the length of exposure to the known TB case.

The individuals are being notified first by phone and then by letter, encouraging them to visit their county health department, the Decker Student Health Services Center (DSHSC) or their primary care provider for screening. Screening at a county health department or the DSHSC is free of charge. There may be a cost charged to the individual and/or their medical insurance provider if they are screened by their primary care provider.

If I have not been contacted, can I still be screened?

If you have not been contacted, You have not been identified as having had close contact with the individual who is being treated, but you can still be screened by contacting your county health department, the BCHD or the DSCHC.

What happens if more people are found to have active TB?

The Broome County Health Department will evaluate the need for further testing once initial testing has been completed.

What can one expect if a screening is advised?

If a person is exposed and breathes in the bacteria, an initial infection may occur without signs or symptoms. Presence of this infection can be determined by a positive tuberculosis screening test once the body has had approximately eight weeks to

develop an immune response. A positive tuberculosis screening test is evidence of a TB infection. A chest X-ray is then, generally, obtained to determine whether there is a lung infection caused by TB. If a lung infection is found, the condition is considered Active Pulmonary Tuberculosis Disease. If the chest X-ray is negative, the diagnosis is usually Latent Tuberculosis Infection (LTBI). Ten percent of healthy individuals found to have LTBI will eventually develop Active Pulmonary Tuberculosis over their lifetime.

There are two types of tuberculosis screening tests: A skin test where a non-infectious protein is injected under the skin of the forearm, and a blood test. The skin test result is evaluated for a swelling response after two or three days. The blood test (QuantiFERON TB Gold and T-SPOT TB test) requires blood being drawn from a vein and sent to a laboratory for testing.

A positive tuberculosis screening test may be related to a past exposure and prior LTBI or active tuberculosis disease. The most common active tuberculosis disease is Active Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

How can I get more information about this particular case?

One Webex session has been scheduled for faculty/staff and two have been scheduled for students/parents. Each session is scheduled for two hours.

- Faculty/staff session: The session is accessible at <https://binghamtonu.webex.com/binghamtonu/j.php?MTID=m0eb6b27665c231c563cf4b60a47f983c> and will begin at 9 a.m. Wednesday, Aug. 16. The meeting number (access code) is 312 911 060 and the meeting password is 8DMi3JSV
- Student/parent sessions:
 - The first session is accessible at <https://binghamtonu.webex.com/binghamtonu/j.php?MTID=m3a955e6b94fd0e703b1cbde83b70d8ae> and will begin at 9 a.m. Thursday, Aug. 17. The meeting number (access code) is 315 290 812 and the meeting password is X8kmJmYY
 - The second session is accessible at <https://binghamtonu.webex.com/binghamtonu/j.php?MTID=m330665705baa4b99e6be5e6162a6826e> and will begin at 5 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 17. The meeting number (access code) is 318 847 155 and the meeting password is nWNwmpEm