

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY
TUBERCULOSIS CONTINUES TO BE A PUBLIC HEALTH THREAT
Prevention is a Key Strategy for TB Elimination
March 24, 2025

World TB Day

Tuberculosis remains a global public health threat. It is estimated that one of every three persons in the world has latent TB infection. Each year 1.5 million people worldwide die of tuberculosis, making it the world's top infectious disease killer.

March 24 commemorates the day in 1882 when Dr. Robert Koch discovered that tubercle bacillus is the causative agent for tuberculosis. This observation is held March 24th of each year to highlight the progress made in the fight against tuberculosis. This day of recognition also promotes increased awareness that TB continues to be a significant public health concern.

The theme that was selected for 2025 is "Think, Test, Treat TB". The theme conveys the message that by implementing key strategies we can reach the goal of eliminating TB. Ending TB requires concentrated action by public and private sectors as well as individuals and communities.



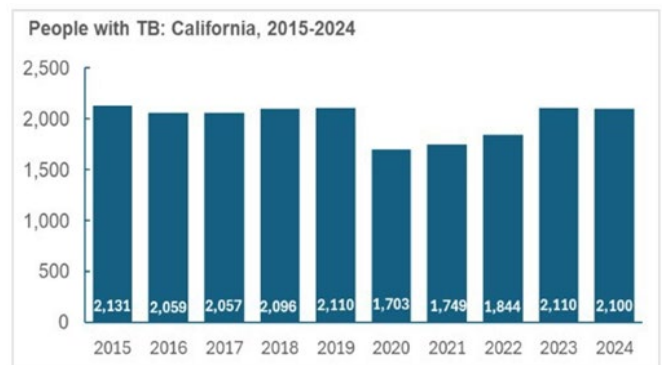
TB Trends in California

California continues to contribute the greatest number of cases to the nation's total TB morbidity. In 2024, 2,100 people were reported to have TB compared with 2,110 in 2023.

California's annual TB incidence was 5.4 cases per 100,000 persons; nearly double the national incidence rate (2.9 per 100,000 in 2023).

Except during the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2022), the number of TB cases has remained consistently 2,000 - 2,200 cases since 2012 despite steady decline in the preceding 20 years when cases fell nearly 60% from 5,382 cases in 1992.

TB cases were reported in 45 (74%) of California's 61 local health jurisdictions (LHJs); 19 (31%) LHJs reported 1-9 cases. The vast majority of TB cases (83%) were attributable to the progression of LTBI to active TB, meaning that they could have been prevented with testing and treatment for LTBI. An estimated 8% of cases were in persons who arrived in California with active TB disease, and another 9% resulted from recent transmission.



Increase in the Number of TB Cases Seen in Riverside County

There was a 33% increase in the number of TB cases reported in 2024 compared to 2023, with an incidence rate of 3.4 and 2.6 per 100,000 population, respectively for the two years.

Although the majority of TB cases occurred in the 65 and over age group, it is important to note that from 2019-2024, 18 active TB cases occurred in children under 15 years of age, all whom were born in the US.

Identification of three multiple drug-resistant cases required intensive medical and Public Health nursing case management to facilitate successful treatment outcomes.

Please refer to the attached Health Matters for additional details on the TB trends in Riverside County.

TB Can Be Prevented with LTBI Treatment

The NHANES-based estimate for LTBI in Riverside for the 2024 population is 131,132. Effective identification and treatment of LTBI are essential to reducing TB transmission and moving toward elimination. A guide summarizing best practices for identifying and testing at risk individuals is attached for your reference. The various regimens for treating LTBI are also provided. Please note that LTBI patients who are contacts to a person with multiple drug-resistant TB, require a different regimen.

US Preventive Services Task Fork (USPSTF) Recommendation – May 2023

USPSTF works to improve the health of people nationwide by making evidence-based recommendations on effective ways to prevent disease and prolong life. The task force reviewed the science and benefits of screening asymptomatic adults at increased risk of latent TB infection. Per the task force, screening for latent TB infection in people at increased risk is an effective way to identify the infection so it can be treated before it progresses to active TB.

Kim Saruwatari, MPH, Director

Please find the link for USPSTF recommendations below.

<https://uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/latent-tuberculosis-infectionscreening>

Opportunity for training on Latent TB Infection

A training is scheduled for April 24, 2025, on LTBI. Please see the attached notice about the training.

New Law Encourages TB Screening

AB 2132 went into effect of January 1, 2025. This law encourages TB screening of Californians aged 18 years and older in primary care settings. See additional information about the law below.

FAQs: These Questions and Answers document addresses key questions from the public, medical providers, and patients and communities to promote understanding and compliance with AB2132.

CDPH Letter to the Medical Board of California: The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has issued a letter to the Medical Board of California to inform healthcare providers about AB2132, which encourages TB screening for all Californians aged 18 and older in primary care settings. This letter, sent to all physicians in California on January 15, 2025, also highlights additional training opportunities for the prevention of latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI).

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/AB-2132.aspx>

Disease Reporting

Confirmed and suspected cases of TB must be reported to Public Health within one day of identification. Reports may be submitted through CalREDIE, if enrolled or to Disease Control by fax to (951) 358-7922.

Healthcare facilities must obtain Public Health approval prior to discharging a patient with or suspected of having TB. A pocket card outlying the criteria is attached for your reference.

Jennifer Chevinsky, MD, MPH, FACPM, Public Health Officer