



Mahoning County

DISTRICT BOARD OF HEALTH

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TUBERCULIN SKIN TESTING OF SCHOOLCHILDREN IN MAHONING COUNTY

- Tuberculosis testing and examination policies in schools are governed by Ohio Administrative Code Section 3701-15-02: "Determination as to the need and frequency of tuberculin testing shall be at the discretion of the board of health of the health district in which each school is located."
- Universal tuberculin skin testing of schoolchildren as a public health measure is no longer an effective method of detecting or preventing cases of childhood tuberculosis. Of 6,258 kindergarteners and 7th graders in the Youngstown City School District screened between 1994 and 2001, only 21 (0.3%) had positive tuberculin skin tests. Nine of these 21 students (43%) were born outside the United States. The Youngstown City School District discontinued mandatory screening of kindergartners and 7th graders in the 2002-2003 school year at the recommendation of the Tuberculosis Control Unit of the District Board of Health.
- The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention encourages targeted tuberculin skin testing of high risk children. Children born in countries with a higher rate of tuberculosis have a much higher risk of acquiring tuberculosis infection than children born in the United States. This risk diminishes the longer a foreign-born child resides in the U.S.
- The District Board of Health advises that all Mahoning County school districts cease universal mandatory tuberculin skin testing of schoolchildren.
- The District Board of Health further advises all Mahoning County school districts to require a tuberculin skin test for new foreign-born students of any age who have arrived in the U.S. within the last five years. Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.71 requires that all positive skin tests be reported promptly to the District Board of Health.
- Tuberculin skin tests can be administered by the District Board of Health at no charge or by family physicians. For more information about tuberculosis screening, contact the District Board of Health at 330-744-4246 or BOHTB@mahoning-health.org.

References:

- (1) CDC. Recommendations for screening children and adolescents. *MMWR* 1995;44(RR-11) 18-34.
- (2) American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Infectious Diseases. Screening for tuberculosis in infants and children. *Pediatrics* 1994;93: 131-4.
- (3) Mohle-Boetani JC. School-based screening for tuberculosis infection. *JAMA* 1995;274: 613-619.
- (4) Driver CR. Tuberculin skin test screening in schoolchildren in the United States. *Pediatrics* 1996;98: 97-102.
- (5) Ohio Department of Health. Requirements for TB screening of school personnel. *TB Update Newsletter*. Issue 13, September 2000.