



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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ADPH offers tuberculosis skin tests

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Jefferson County Department of Health and the Alabama Department of Public Health are working closely with the staff of the University of Alabama at Birmingham to assure that faculty, staff and students who may have been exposed to a single case of active tuberculosis receive tuberculin skin tests. Approximately 225 people in three different classes will be offered skin tests.

The Alabama Department of Public Health is also providing skin tests to staff at SunGard, a data entry company located in Shelby County where the same individual was employed. Officials of the company have worked closely with the health department, and the initial investigation includes approximately 140 persons working near that individual.

Dr. Charles Woernle, assistant state health officer for disease control and prevention, stated, "No additional cases of tuberculosis have been identified at this time and the investigation is proceeding per protocol. Although the current investigation understandably prompts concern, the public should note that we are well versed in the control and prevention of TB. The investigation is going well, and we will provide updates as we move through this process."

Finding positive tests during initial screening is not unusual. The health department notes that a positive skin test by itself is not proof of tuberculosis – that this test is only a screening tool to help identify those persons who may benefit from further evaluation. Any person who tests positive but does not have active disease will be offered preventive therapy.

Public health officials are committed to the health and safety of the public and will assure that appropriate screening and follow-up are provided.

For more information regarding tuberculosis or the screening activities at UAB, please contact Wanda Heard at 205-930-1483 or Pam Barrett at 334-850-1155. General information about tuberculosis is available at: Q&A: <http://www.cdc.gov/tb/fags/default.htm>; Fact sheets: <http://www.cdc.gov/tb/pubs/TBfactsheets>.)

