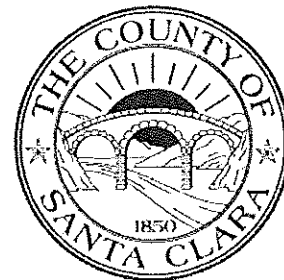


County of Santa Clara
Public Health Department

TB Prevention and Control Program
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November 14, 2011

RE: Public Health Mandate for Tuberculosis Screening in Santa Clara County Schools

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Since 1989, Santa Clara County has required tuberculosis (TB) testing for all first time entrants into kindergarten and high school. The TB screening test can be either the Mantoux Tuberculin Skin Test (TST) or a blood test. This TB screening test should be completed within twelve months prior to kindergarten entry, or transfer into grades one through twelve. These categories of students attending both public and private schools are required to undergo TB screening based on the authority given the Santa Clara County Health Officer under the California Health and Safety Code, Section 121515.

Most children will not have a positive test. If your child does have a positive test, this means that your child is infected with the germ (bacteria) that causes TB. A positive test does not mean that your child is sick or that your child can give TB to other people. Children who have a positive test will, however, need to have a chest x-ray to be sure the disease is not active. Children with a positive test and a chest x-ray that the doctor says is normal **will not** be excluded from school.

Doctors know that 10% of the children who have a positive TB test today will become sick with TB at some time in their life. This sickness can be prevented by the child taking one pill (called isoniazid) every day for nine (9) months. The medicine will kill the TB germ and protect your child from developing TB disease in the future. This is the way to stop the spread of TB.

Santa Clara County continues to have one of the highest case rates for active TB disease in the United States. Over one third of the county's population is at risk for TB infection, the non-contagious form of TB. Your cooperation with the TB screening mandate helps limit the spread of TB in our schools. It also identifies children who have the non-contagious form of TB so that they can be offered preventive treatment.

We thank you for your cooperation with the TB screening mandate. TB is a treatable and preventable disease. Help us eliminate it in Santa Clara County.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julie Higashi MD PhD".

Julie Higashi, MD PhD
TB Controller/Deputy Health Officer