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TO: Grant County Media

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT

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Possible Active Tuberculosis Case in Grant County

Grant County is investigating multiple contacts

GRANT COUNTY, WA – The Grant County Health District (GCHD) is currently investigating a Grant County resident suspected of having active tuberculosis (TB). **No further cases have been identified at this time.**

This individual with possible TB was treated at several healthcare facilities in Grant County during the course of the illness. The investigation by GCHD aims to find all those who could have been exposed. In total, the investigation has found approximately 200 individuals who were in contact with this person. They reside in three counties (Grant, Lincoln and Adams) and have been notified directly by GCHD. This case is not yet confirmed, but steps are being taken in a precautionary manner to ensure that those who need additional monitoring or testing are aware.

What is TB?

TB is a serious disease that usually affects the lungs but can attack any part of the body, including the kidneys, spine, and brain. TB is caused by bacteria called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. When a person with TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs or sneezes, tiny particles containing *M. tuberculosis* may be expelled into the air. If another person inhales air that contains these particles, the TB bacteria may enter the lungs causing infection. A person needs to inhale only a few of these germs to become infected. **TB is NOT spread by:** shaking hands, sharing food or drink, touching bed linens or toilet seats, sharing toothbrushes or kissing.

After a person with a healthy immune system breathes in TB bacteria, he or she will have 10% lifetime chance of developing TB. If the person's immune system is compromised or becomes compromised, however, the bacteria will begin to multiply. From the lungs, bacteria can move through the blood to other parts of the body.

Signs & symptoms of TB

- Cough for more than 3 weeks
- Fever, night sweats
- Unintentional weight loss, loss of appetite
- Fatigue, chest pain
- Blood in the sputum



If you have symptoms of TB AND think you may have been exposed, **please discuss this with your healthcare provider or call GCHD and speak with a Public Health Nurse (509-766-7960).**

How do I know if I have a TB infection or TB disease?

If you have been around someone who has TB disease, you should go to your primary care provider or call GCHD to talk about risk of exposure and possible testing. GCHD is not recommending testing for everyone, people who have possibly been exposed have been contacted by GCHD and referred to their primary healthcare provider for testing.

There are two tests that can be used to help detect a possible TB infection:

- A TB skin test or a TB blood test. The skin test is used most often.

If TB disease is in your lungs or throat, you can give TB germs to your family and friends. They can get sick with TB disease. You may have to be separated from other people until you can't spread TB germs. This probably won't be for very long, if you take your medicine as your health care provider instructs.

Can TB be treated?

YES, TB is treatable. If you have TB disease, it is very important that you finish the medicine, and take the drugs **exactly as you are told**. If you stop taking the drugs too soon, you can become sick again. If you do not take the drugs correctly, the germs that are still alive may become difficult to treat with those drugs. It takes at least six months and possibly as long as one year to kill all the TB germs. **It is very important that you take your medicine as your doctor recommends.**

For more information about Tuberculosis visit:

- [TB website](#) | CDC
- [Basic Tb facts](#) | CDC
- [TB treatment](#) | CDC
- [TB and other health problems](#) | CDC
- [TB publications](#) | CDC

Consultation

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