



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Perry County Health Department to give money to people screened and treated for TB

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) is working to stop a tuberculosis (TB) outbreak in Perry County. The department is sending additional nurses and TB investigators to find patients with tuberculosis (TB) and to provide preventive therapy to people who may have been exposed to multiple active TB patients. These patients are primarily in the town of Marion in Perry County.

“This is so important and of such concern that we are giving monetary incentives to people who come in for screening and necessary treatment,” Pam Barrett, director of the Division of TB Control, said.

From Jan. 11 through Jan. 29, the Perry County Health Department will give

- \$20 to anyone coming in to be screened for TB by the TSPOT blood test.
- Another \$20 for returning after three days to get the result.
- A third \$20 for keeping an appointment to get a chest X-ray if it is recommended.
- An additional \$100 to a patient if it is recommended he or she take medication and treatment is completed.

Perry County is the only local health department that will offer money to patients for TB screening and treatment.

Patients diagnosed with TB in other cities and towns in Alabama are known to be linked to cases in Marion. Specifically, 20 of 26 patients diagnosed since January 2014 are from Marion, four are from the Tuscaloosa area, and two are from Centreville.

This is a case rate of 253 per 100,000 population in the town of Marion. This far exceeds the TB case rate of 2.5 per 100,000 in the whole state of Alabama in 2015. Of these 26 patients, four of them are children. Three adults have died.

Symptoms of TB include cough lasting more than two weeks, shortness of breath, fever, night sweats, weight loss and fatigue. A person may be infected with the TB germ and have no symptoms. Fortunately, patients can be treated preventively before becoming ill.

Testing will be done on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. at the Perry County Health Department at 1748 S. Washington St., Marion. All services are provided at no charge. No appointment is needed for this service.

For further information or questions, please contact Pam Barrett, Director, Division of TB Control, at (334) 467-8208, or pam.barrett@adph.state.al.us.

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