

Update: Nationwide Shortage of Tubersol (PPD), Alaska Recommendations

April 12, 2013

This is an update to the Health Alert dated March 8, 2013 (see http://www.epi.alaska.gov/phan/AKPHAN_20130308_Tubersol.pdf).

In addition to the nationwide shortage of isoniazid (see previous health alerts), there is an extended shortage of Tubersol (PPD) for tuberculin skin testing (TST). The State of Alaska is unable to secure more Tubersol at this time and product availability is not expected to improve until late May, at the earliest.

Aplisol, another product that may be used for TST is on allocation and only available in limited quantities.

Until these shortages are resolved, the State of Alaska will be unable to supply Tubersol or Aplisol for routine PPD testing. Contact the Section of Epidemiology (907-269-8000) for guidance or to discuss specific needs at this time. As the situation evolves, we will provide additional updates.

Continued Recommendations for TB testing due to Tubersol Shortage

- Prioritize TSTs – Test high risk groups only
 - Contacts to an active TB case
 - Immunocompromised persons
 - HIV positive persons
- Defer annual screening of employees
- Providers may consider substituting interferon gamma release assays (IGRA) blood test for TSTs during the ongoing shortage. Testing is available at private reference laboratories in a number of Alaskan communities. The Alaska TB Program does not provide or pay for IGRA testing.
- Notify SOE if you have Tubersol or Aplisol in stock which you will not be able to use in the next 2 months. SOE is attempting to build and maintain a stock of PPD testing products for use in high priority situations.

Reference:

CDC Health Alert Network: Info Service

“Nationwide Shortage of Tuberculin Skin Test Antigens: CDC Recommendations for Patient Care and Public Health Practice”, available at : <http://emergency.cdc.gov/HAN/han00345.asp>