



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends a yearly flu vaccine for ages 6 months and older.

Take everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs.

- * Avoid close contact with people who are ill.
- * While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- * If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone.
- * Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- * Wash your hands OFTEN with soap and water.
- * Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth to prevent the spread of germs.
- * Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with the germs.

Tuberculosis (TB) is caused by a bacterium called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. The bacteria usually attack the lungs, but TB bacteria can attack any part of the body such as the kidney, spine, and brain. Not everyone infected with TB bacteria becomes sick. As a result, two TB-related conditions exist: latent TB infection (LTBI) and TB disease. If not treated properly, TB disease can be fatal.

TB bacteria are spread through the air from one person to another. The TB bacteria are put into the air when a person with TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs, speaks, or sings. People nearby may breathe in these bacteria and become infected.

TB is NOT spread by:

- * Shaking hands
- * Touching bed linens or toilet seats
- * Contact with another persons saliva

Vaccinations are available through your healthcare provider.

HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus. The virus spreads through certain body fluids that attacks the body's immune system.

HIV is NOT transmitted by:

- * Air or water
- * Insects or pets
- * Sharing toilets, food or drinks

HIV can be transmitted by having intercourse, sharing needles or syringes, from mother to child during pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding, being stuck with an HIV contaminated needle or other sharp objects like razor blades.

The only way to know for sure whether you have HIV is to get tested. CDC recommends that everyone between the ages of 13 and 64 get tested for HIV at least once as part of routine health care. Knowing your HIV status gives you powerful information to help you take steps to keep you and your partner healthy.

You can ask your health care provider for an HIV test. Many medical clinics, substance abuse programs, community health centers, and hospitals offer them too.

Testing Sites

- ◆ Call 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
- ◆ Visit gettested.cdc.gov
- ◆ Or text your ZIP code to KNOW IT (566948)

You can also buy a home testing kit at a pharmacy or online.

Hepatitis B is a liver infection caused by the Hepatitis B virus (HBV). Hepatitis B is transmitted when blood, semen, or another body fluid from a person infected with the Hepatitis B virus enters the body of someone who is not infected. This can happen through sex-

ual contact; sharing needles, syringes, or other drug-injection equipment; or from mother to baby during birth. Hepatitis B vaccine has been successfully integrated into the childhood vaccination schedule, contributing to a 96% decline in the incidence of acute Hepatitis B in children and adolescents. Currently, approximately 95% of new HBV infections occur among adults, and unvaccinated adults with behavioral risk factors or who are household contacts or sex partners of HBV-infected persons remain at risk.

MRSA (Staphylococcus aureus) or staph infection is a major human pathogen that colonizes and infects both hospitalized patients with decreased host defenses and healthy immunologically competent people in the community. Those suspected of having MRSA infections must be individually counseled about what causes the infections and measures that can be taken to prevent or minimize their recurrence.

- Maintain good hand washing and body hygiene.
- Keep cuts, scrapes and wounds clean, and keep covered until healed.
- Be sure to avoid sharing personal items like towels and razors.
- Some symptoms of MRSA infections are red, swollen, or painful areas sometimes filled with pus or actively draining.
- Seek medical attention as soon as possible if any of the above symptoms appear.



Risk Management

Infection Control

TDCJ

Volume 17, Issue 2

February 2017

Correctional Managed Health Care (CMHC) states, during the flu season, all units should:

- * Encourage handwashing with soap
- * Encourage cough etiquette (cover mouth or wear mask if coughing)
- * Disinfect common areas with a bleach solution

Inform healthcare providers who provide direct patients care that they should be vaccinated because unvaccinated employees can transmit influenza to patients. Unvaccinated employees may be re-assigned to duties without direct patient involvement or asked to wear a mask during the flu season.

Offenders complaining of symptoms consistent with influenza-like illness (ILI) should be triaged as soon as possible. If an offender is determined by medical to have ILI, the offender should be housed alone or with other offenders that have ILI. The offenders should remain in isolation until they have been off medications for 24 hours or until 7 days has passed. Offenders should not be transported on a chain bus or MPV (Multi Purpose Vehicle) except for medical emergencies.

TDCJ employees exposed to blood and body fluids known to transmit Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) and Hepatitis C Virus (HCV), also referred to as "occupational exposure", in the workplace shall receive confidential counseling and testing in accordance with Worker's Compensation and Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) guidelines. Employees will be provided prompt evaluation and treatment for occupational exposures. This

policy applies to employees and volunteers only.

Each newly hired correctional officer will be screened for Tuberculosis (TB) within 30 days of arrival at his or her first unit of assignment during the initial on the job training as a condition of employment.

Unless an offender has written documentation of a previous positive skin test, one will be given to all individuals entering TDCJ and then annually during the anniversary month of incarceration. Individuals with a confirmed past history of TB and those with a documented significant reaction to a previous skin test, or all known or suspected HIV infected offenders, will receive a screening chest x-ray in lieu of skin testing upon entering The TDCJ. HIV counseling and testing will be offered to any individual with TB infection or TB disease.

Screening and evaluation of offenders at risk or HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) will be standardized. HIV counseling will be conducted by a licensed health care provider or an employee who has completed a TDCJ Health Services-approved training course in HIV counseling. Routine Antigen/Antibody testing is available to all offenders upon request. Mandatory testing of an offender who exposes a staff member to blood or bodily fluids will be done according to procedures in Correction Managed Health Care Policy B-14.27.

All offenders should be evaluated for risk factors for Hepatitis B. On the initial intake physical examination, signs and symptoms of liver disease should be screened.

Some risk factors or methods of transition are:

- * Intercourse with an infected partner
- * Injection drug use that involves sharing needles, syringes, or drug preparation equipment
- * Birth (transmitted from an infected mother to her baby during birth)
- * Contact with blood or open sores of an infected person
- * Needle sticks or sharp instrument exposures
- * Sharing items such as razors or toothbrushes with an infected person

The best prevention is to educate staff and offenders about modes or transmission, prevention and early reporting of signs and symptoms of infection.

Hepatitis C is transmitted primarily by blood.

- * Injection drug use (needles or syringes)
- * Needle stick injuries
- * Perinatal transmission
- * Sharing personal items contaminated with blood such as razors or toothbrushes
- * Unprotected sex
- * Sharing instruments used for body piercings and body art.

All offenders should be evaluated for the above listed risk factors for Hepatitis C upon the initial intake physical examination.