

GP Connect

Keeping GPs informed in the changing primary health landscape



**WA Primary
Health Alliance**
Better health, together

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PERTH NORTH, PERTH SOUTH,
COUNTRY WA
An Australian Government Initiative

5 September 2019 - In Brief

Don't miss the signs of tuberculosis

**Update from Maree Hose
Clinical Nurse Manager,
Public Health, North
Metropolitan Health Service**

Tuberculosis (TB) diagnosis is often delayed because it is uncommon and usually subacute in presentation. This can result in a more severe illness and a greater risk of transmission.

In Australia, 90 per cent of TB cases are found in people who were born overseas in a country where TB is common. More than 50 per cent of cases diagnosed arrived in Australia in the last five years.

Most patients are young adults who are not especially unwell. Symptoms of pulmonary TB (representing less than 60 per cent of all cases) include a chronic cough that has lasted for more than three weeks. Sputum production is often not prominent, and haemoptysis is a late symptom. Cough may be accompanied by night sweats, fatigue and unexplained weight or appetite loss. Cervical lymphadenopathy is the second most common presentation of TB.

If you suspect active pulmonary TB, collect sputum for acid fast bacilli (AFB) smear and culture. Order a chest X-ray, as a normal chest X-ray is unlikely in TB. If you suspect extra-pulmonary TB, send relevant microbiological specimens for AFBs.

Do not use Quantiferon TB Gold Plus (blood test) as a diagnostic test in a patient with TB symptoms as this is not a test for the diagnosis of active TB disease. It detects an immune response to TB, which can indicate latent TB infection.



TB is a notifiable disease. Information about these, including a link to the required form, is available on the “[Notifiable Communicable Diseases and Related Conditions](#)” HealthPathway.

If you do suspect or diagnose TB in your patient, contact the Western Australian Tuberculosis Control Program (WATBCP) for advice and support on (08) 9222 8500 or by emailing ACCADMIN@health.wa.gov.au

TB patients can be [referred to WATBCP](#) to confirm diagnosis, and for treatment and case management. Any tests, consultations and medications are provided at no cost to the patient.

For more information, visit https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/S_T/Tuberculosis

Clinical Updates

GP consultation on cervical screening recall and reminders

WA Health invites GPs to provide important feedback on a suite of recall and reminder letter templates for cervical screening. Once finalised, these templates will be made available to assist in guiding clear and accurate communication to patients.

The closing date for feedback is 30 September 2019.

To take part in the consultation, please visit: https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Consultation-for-cervical-screening-and-follow-up-letters

Contact Stacey-Mae Prokopyszyn on (08) 6458 1740 or email cervicalscreening@health.wa.gov.au for more information.

GPs may also wish to review the "Cervical Screening" HealthPathway.

Overdue vaccination reminders

The Department of Human Services (DHS) has begun sending additional reminder letters to individuals overdue for vaccination.

Currently, parents of children overdue for vaccination are sent reminder letters when their children are 10, 21 and 54 months. However, additional letters have been sent to families with children aged seven, 13, 15, 19 and 49 months who are not in receipt of family assistance payments.

Adolescents who are overdue for their childhood and adolescent vaccinations will be sent letters when they are 14.5, 17 and 18 years of age.

Information about immunisation for these groups can be found on the "Immunisation – Childhood" and "Immunisation – Adolescent" HealthPathways.

Visit news.wapha.org.au for more clinical updates

Education Events

Early Career GP Conference

RACGP

Saturday 7 – Sunday 8 September

Immunisation and cancer screening education

WA Primary Health Alliance

17, 18 September

9, 10, 11, 15, 16 October

GP & Practice Team: Advance care planning education event - Mandurah

WA Primary Health Alliance

Tuesday 17 September

Satellite GP education event: All about syphilis and gonorrhoea

WA Health

Wednesday 18 September

GP Hubs: Supporting your patient in a complex system - An aged care study

East Metro Health Service and WA Primary Health Alliance; HealthPathways WA

Tuesday 17 September

GP & Practice Team: Advanced care planning education event - Rivervale

WA Primary Health Alliance

Saturday 21 September

GP & Practice Team: Advanced care planning education event - Greenwood

WA Primary Health Alliance

Saturday 26 October

For more information on upcoming GP education events or to register, visit wapha.org.au/events

In case you missed the August feature...

Visit our [online news hub](#) to read a personal account from Transfolk WA's Kim Balfour about Medical Misgendering.