



"...meeting community needs...enhancing quality of life."

Dear Parent,

An active case of tuberculosis (TB) has been identified in a student who attends Xavier High School. This student is currently receiving medical care, recovering and will remain in isolation until no longer infectious.

The Appleton Health Department is working closely with the State of Wisconsin Division of Public Health and with Xavier High School Administration to assure that anyone who has been in close contact with the ill person is being contacted and will be offered free testing and treatment if necessary. The health department mailed letters home today to students who have been identified as close contacts.

TB is caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and is spread by inhaling or breathing in infected air. TB can be transmitted when a person with TB disease coughs, sneezes, sings or talks. Catching TB from an infected person is not easy. Most often, transmission of TB is limited to family members. In order to be infected with TB, close (within 6 feet) and repeated or continuous contact (more than eight hours) with the person who has TB is usually needed.

In Wisconsin, approximately 40-50 new cases of tuberculosis disease are diagnosed each year. TB can cause both infection and active disease. When infected, a person will have a positive TB skin or blood test, but will not be ill and cannot infect anyone else. If the infection becomes active disease, the person may have symptoms such as cough, fever, night sweats, unintended weight loss and may cough up blood.

TB disease is preventable – persons with TB infection can take a drug that will prevent the infection from moving into active disease.

TB disease is curable – if a person has active disease, a combination of medications given by directly-observed therapy can cure the disease.

For more information please see the attached TB fact sheet and/or contact the Appleton Health Department, Monday-Friday 8:00-4:30 p.m. at 832-6429.