

Regional Training and Medical Consultation Center (RTMCC)

The Southeastern National Tuberculosis Center (SNTC) is one of four RTMCCs funded by the CDC. As a RTMCC, the SNTC seeks to address the **training, education, medical consultation, and technical assistance** needs of healthcare providers and TB programs in 11 southeastern states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Focus on . . . XDR-TB

XDR-TB — The Future is Here

Special editorial provided by Joanne Julien, MD, SNTC Medical Consultant

The most surprising part about the recent news item of an airline traveler with drug resistant TB is not that he is US born, or that the case is primary resistance in an immunocompetent host, rather, what is truly unbelievable,

is that it has taken this long for the world to take notice of a global problem that has been devastating millions of lives for decades.

Drug resistant strains are a direct result of global health policies that have dispensed drugs to low-resource countries without arming them with the most basic technology and infrastructure needed to combat TB. In the most affected countries, the only laboratory diagnostic tool available is the 100-year-old sputum smear – a test that has long been abandoned by the US as a single test for TB. Treating TB without appropriate laboratory support is like performing surgery in the dark. It is unacceptable in this country and it should be unacceptable everywhere else.

XDR-TB is particularly ominous because it shoots a bullet in one of the most effective class drugs that has only recently been added to our armamentarium. Losing Quinolones is a devastating blow to a dwindling list of therapeutic options. We must continue to discourage the widespread use of this class of drugs, particularly in cases of “community acquired pneumonia” presenting with indolent symptoms and cavitary lesions. In addition, we must work to increase the availability of state-of-the-art diagnostic laboratory services including rapid molecular testing for all TB programs in the region. We are entering a phase in TB management that is truly uncharted. There is no evidence-based literature to guide our management. The second line agents are complex in their dosing regimens, side effect profiles and drug interactions, leaving even the most experienced consultant feeling despair.

Fortunately in the US, the cases of MDR and XDR remain low. Unfortunately, this makes it nearly impossible for the individual clinician to develop expertise in this area. The most effective way to deal with this will be to regionalize our case management. **Now more than ever it is critical that we work together to share our experience and knowledge.**

How the SNTC Responded to Recent XDR-TB Events

The SNTC has provided those within our region the most current information as soon as it was available. This includes: 1) a conference call with medical providers throughout the southeast regarding the contact investigations being conducted and the current algorithms provided by the CDC, 2) this Special Issue of the Close Contact, e-newsletter, 3) dissemination of information about the SNTC and the medical consultation services provided through the 1-800-4TB-INFO, 24-hour TB HOTLINE, 4) posting relevant XDR-TB resources on the SNTC home page under What's Happening, and 5) in September, the SNTC will launch a **monthly regional MDR conference call**, inviting all medical consultants from the southeast to present cases. This will be a uniquely challenging and collaborative environment with the goal of creating the strongest network of medical experts who will be prepared for whatever the future of TB control may hold. **More information to follow!**

Where to go for information about . . .

TB
<http://www.cdc.gov/tb/default.htm>

TB and Air Travel
http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2006/WHO_HTM_TB_2006.363_eng.pdf

TB Infection Control
<http://www.cdc.gov/tb/pubs/tbfactsheets/ichcs.htm>

TB Testing
<http://www.cdc.gov/tb/pubs/tbfactsheets/skintesting.htm>
<http://www.cdc.gov/tb/pubs/tbfactsheets/QFT.htm>

XDR-TB (Extremely Drug Resistant TB)
<http://www.cdc.gov/tb/pubs/tbfactsheets/xdrtb.htm>
<http://www.cdc.gov/tb/pubs/tbfactsheets/cdcandxdrtb.htm>
<http://www.cdc.gov/tb/xdrtb>
<http://www.cdc.gov/tb/xdrtb/timeline.htm>

Upcoming Events

Training and Education

TST Training
July 9, 2007

Grand Rounds/Webinar – A 10-Year History of the TB Trials Consortium: What have we learned?
July 18, 2007

Contact Investigation and Interviewing Skills
July 23-24, 2007 and July 26-27, 2007

Newsy Bytes . . .

Thank you to Steve Kelley for permitting us to use his cartoon on TB.

Steve's cartoon first appeared in The Times-Picayune of New Orleans and was also picked up by Newsweek.

We need your help! Close Contact, e-Newsletter Evaluation

Please help us provide you with the type of information and resources that you need in your TB work! Please click on the link (<http://www.zoomerang.com/survey.zgi?p=WEB225J6CS7RXD>) to complete the survey. **Thank you!**

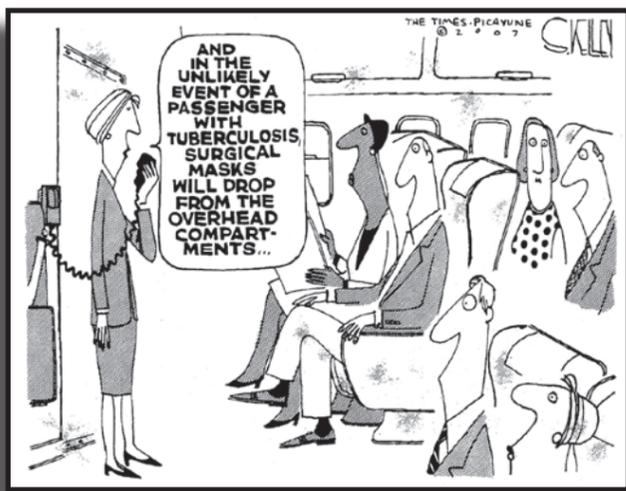
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Medical Consultation - 800-4TB-INFO

We need your input and ideas . . . Please help us serve you better by giving us feedback and suggestions on our e-newsletter. We welcome your comments and ask that you send them to sntc@medicine.ufl.edu



SNTC IN ACTION
coming to your state soon

JULY Mississippi North Carolina	OCTOBER Mississippi
AUGUST Georgia - TB ETN	NOVEMBER Florida Kentucky Virginia
SEPTEMBER Florida South Carolina	