

Control of tuberculosis in the United States. American Thoracic Society.

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TB continues to be a major public health problem in many areas of the United States. Elimination of this disease will require coordinated efforts of public health agencies, voluntary health associations, health-care providers, and community groups. TB controls is comprised of a variety of activities. Identification and treatment of patients with clinically active disease should be the highest priority for all TB control programs. Identification and preventive treatment of infected contacts and persons with tuberculous infection at greatest risk for developing disease (eg, HIV-infected, young children) should also receive high priority. Attention should then be given to identifying other high-risk groups and administering preventive therapy to those infected. While TB control occurs in many different settings, the health department TB control program plays a pivotal role in providing clinical services, and performing contact investigations, tuberculin-testing and prevention activities, surveillance, and evaluation of the community's overall progress in TB elimination. Health departments should receive strong and continuing support from medical care providers, voluntary health organizations, and community groups if TB elimination is to be achieved.