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Operation Asha: Best Practices for Reducing Missing Cases

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TB Screening Guidelines

Current TB screening procedures overlook a number of key host characteristics, social, and environmental factors. In order to reduce the number of missed cases, we propose an additional set of screening criteria that takes these factors into account. Note that the same signs and symptoms should be considered for all potential TB suspects.

Research has shown that the following factors are significantly correlated with TB infections:

High Risk Groups

- Diabetes Mellitus Patients
- HIV/AIDS Patients
- Elderly patients (45 years old or more)
- TB contacts

Host Characteristics

- Alcoholism, more than 40g alcohol/day
- Non-alcohol substance abuse
- Smoking
- Malnutrition
- Young age (10 years old or less)
- Indigenous peoples
- Male
- Healthcare Worker
- Immunosuppressive drugs or conditions (other than HIV/AIDS)

Social Factors

- Low socioeconomic status (less than \$1.25/day)

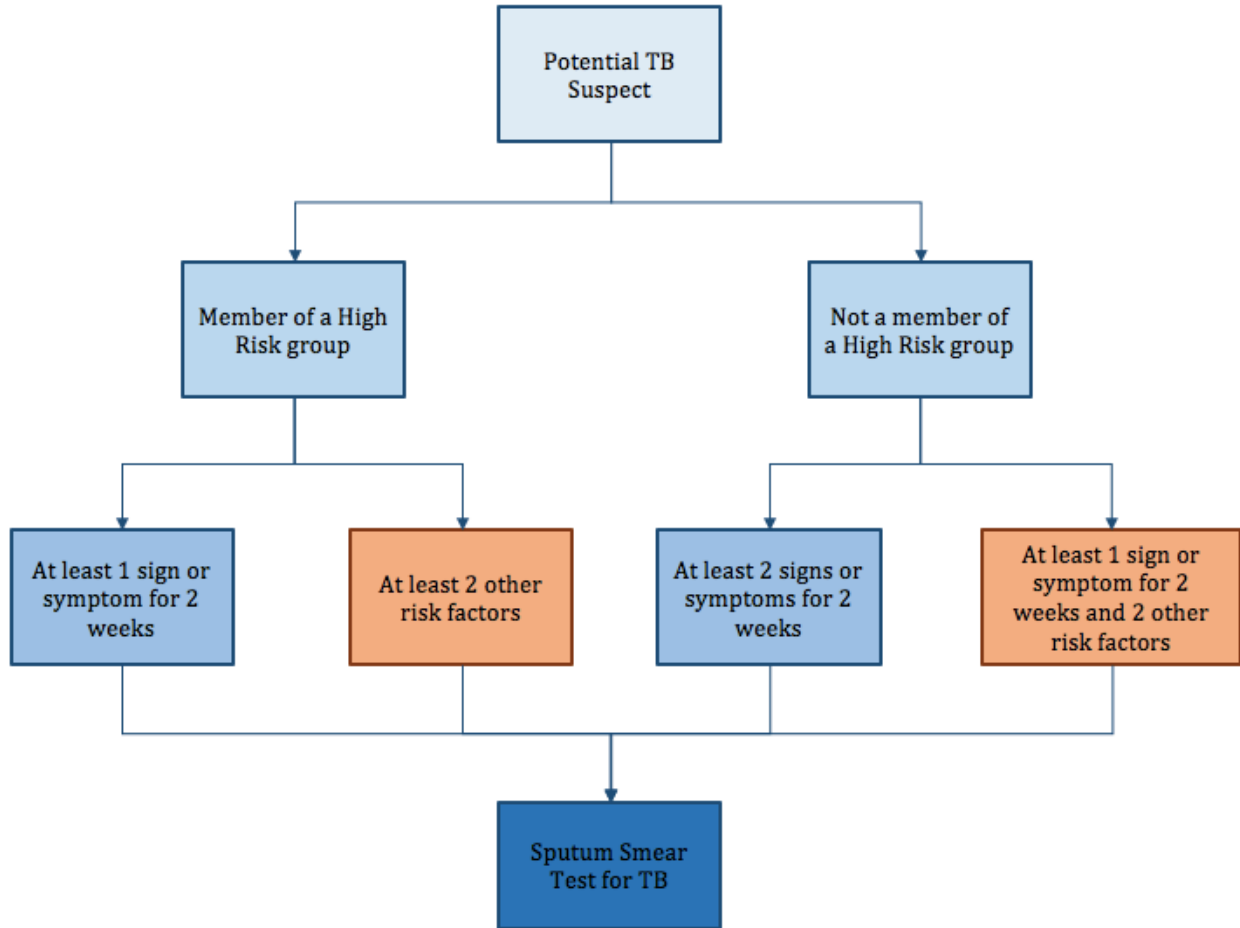
Environmental

- Live in a location with high rates of indoor air pollution
- Live in prisons
- Work in a mine or other area with high exposure to silica

The following page contains a flowchart that shows the current screening guidelines and the proposed set of guidelines. The new screening guidelines will expand TB testing and treatment to groups that would have otherwise been overlooked.

We hope that this new set of screening criteria will expand the number of potential TB suspects who are testing, increasing the number of TB cases found and treated. This will reduce the number of missed TB cases, as well as the prevalence and incidence of this disease.

The following flowchart depicts both the current and proposed screening guidelines. Proposed screening guidelines are shown in orange.



References

1. Narasimhan P, Wood J, MacIntyre C, Mathai D. Risk Factors for Tuberculosis. *Pulmonary Medicine*. 2013;2013:1-11. doi:10.1155/2013/828939.
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