

March 21, 2017

## DOH-PINELLAS UNITES WITH CDC TO END TB



**Contact:**

Maggie Hall, PIO

[Margarita.Hall@FLHealth.gov](mailto:Margarita.Hall@FLHealth.gov)

(727) 824-6908 (media only)



The Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County (DOH-Pinellas) joins the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in recognizing Friday, March 24, as **World TB Day**, which commemorates the discovery of the bacteria that causes tuberculosis (TB). This year's theme is "United to End TB" and eliminating tuberculosis in Florida remains a priority for the department.

"The community should be aware that TB can be treated and cured," said Dr. Ulyee Choe, DOH-Pinellas' director and an infectious disease specialist. "The most important thing is to educate yourself about the disease and how it's treated."

Tuberculosis is one of the world's deadliest diseases and it is caused by a bacterium called *mycobacterium tuberculosis* that usually attacks the lungs, but can attack any part of the body, including the kidney, spine and brain. Latent TB can live within the body without making you sick. People with latent TB do not have symptoms, are not infectious and cannot make others sick.

TB is spread through the air and symptoms of the disease include:

- A bad cough that lasts three weeks or longer;
- Pain in the chest;
- Coughing up blood or sputum; and
- Weakness or fatigue, weight loss, loss of appetite, chills, fever and sweating at night.

Through its statewide TB program and its support of the Florida System of Tuberculosis Care, the department is making significant strides towards its goal to eliminate TB in the state. Cases of TB in Florida have gone down by 35 percent from 988 cases in 2007 to 639 in 2016. In 2016, Pinellas recorded 31 TB cases; as of Feb. 28, there's been only one case this year. The department has implemented improved testing and treatment technologies, making it easier for clients to successfully complete therapy.

For information about DOH-Pinellas, go to [www.PinellasHealth.com](http://www.PinellasHealth.com). Follow us on Twitter [@HealthyPinellas](https://twitter.com/HealthyPinellas).

To explore resources relating to TB and learn more, visit the department's [website](#). For additional information about World TB Day 2017, visit the CDC's World TB Day [page](#).

-end-

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit [www.FloridaHealth.gov](http://www.FloridaHealth.gov).