

the risk to coworkers is minimal, we do not screen patients. A higher risk of nosocomial transmission of *M tuberculosis*, however, exists when the exposure occurs in the inpatient setting and involves prolonged and repeated contact; in this setting, the stone-in-the-pond principle would include patients among the close contacts to be screened early in the contact investigation.

Could at least one of the exposures that occurred have been prevented by restricting HIV-seropositive employees with untreated TB infection from working in settings with high patient volume? At Grady Memorial Hospital, employees receive infection control and TB-prevention education at new employee orientation and annually thereafter. Employees with immunocompromising conditions, including HIV infection, are encouraged to disclose their HIV status, confidentially and voluntarily, to the Occupational Health Program, with the option to transfer to other work assignments if their current assignment puts them or others at risk. Employees undergo mandatory tuberculin screening every 6 months; taking preventive therapy for TB infection is voluntary. The ER HCW chose not to disclose his HIV status and not to take TB preventive therapy.

Although we did not find evidence of nosocomial *M tuberculosis* transmission, a high prevalence of infection and a very high incidence rate of TB were documented in patients from three different outpatient settings, reflecting the large pool of infected persons from which future cases will arise in this inner-city population served by our hospital. Preventive therapy programs to reduce the pool of infected persons likely to progress to active disease and strategies to increase acceptability of, and adherence to, such programs are needed.

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MRSA Outbreak in a Veterinary Hospital

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During a 13-month period, 11 horses seen at a veterinary teaching hospital in East Lansing, Michigan, developed postprocedural MRSA infections. The biochemical profile and antibiogram of each isolate suggested that the isolates may have

come from a common source. Because MRSA is very uncommon in animals, nasal-swab specimens were obtained from five staff members associated with surgery and recovery. The MRSA isolates from the humans and the horses appeared to be identical by pulsed-field gel electrophoresis. The investigators believe that members of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital staff were the primary

source of the infection, although the specific mode of transmission is unclear.

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