COVID-19 and Tuberculosis

The coronavirus (or COVID-19) pandemic has made the focus on tuberculosis (or TB) prevention and treatment more necessary and urgent in the state of Virginia.

**COVID-19**
- COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by a virus that can spread from person-to-person
- Additional COVID-19 Symptoms:
  - Symptoms may develop 2-14 days after exposure
  - Other possible symptoms:
    - new loss of taste or smell
    - sore throat
    - congestion or runny nose
    - nausea or vomiting
    - muscle or body aches
    - diarrhea
    - bilateral abnormalities on chest x-ray

**TB**
- TB is a serious and sometimes deadly illness caused by bacteria that usually attacks the lungs, but can also affect other parts of the body
- Additional TB Disease Symptoms:
  - Symptoms may develop after weeks to years if not treated for latent TB infection
  - Other possible symptoms:
    - night sweats
    - coughing up blood or phlegm
    - weight loss
    - unilateral abnormalities on chest x-ray

**Shared Symptoms of TB Disease and COVID-19**
- Both COVID-19 and TB may cause:
  - cough
  - shortness of breath
  - fever
  - chills
  - fatigue
  - chest pain
  - abnormal chest x-ray
- Both can spread when an infected person coughs, sneezes, sings, or talks

**Who is at a Higher Risk for TB?**
- People who have lived in or visited another country other than the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, or Western and Northern Europe
- Those who have a weakened immune system (e.g., HIV, organ transplant, cancer, diabetes, etc.)
- History of close contact to someone who has TB disease
- People who have experienced homelessness or been incarcerated

**Recommendations**
- Test for TB in individuals with TB risk factors
- Encourage and initiate appropriate treatment
- Test for COVID-19 in individuals with a new cough
- Encourage physical distancing and wearing a mask when around others
- Encourage frequent hand washing and surface disinfection
- Encourage COVID-19 vaccination

**Where to Get Tested/More Information**
- Have questions? Call the VDH hotline 877-ASK-VDH3 (877-275-8343)