

# TB TIPS

*TB anywhere is TB everywhere*



## TB: Think Globally, Act Locally

Spring-Summer 2014

Welcome to the fourth edition of TB TIPS; a newsletter promoting TB awareness in Ontario County. TB is old. It flourished in ancient Greece and the Roman Empire. Egyptian mummies dating back thousands of years BCE bear tell-tale signs of TB disease. In fact, tiny impressions in a 500,000-year-old *Homo erectus* skull fragment discovered in Turkey in 2007 look suspiciously like TB.

There was hope 25 years ago that TB would be a memory by 2025. Though we have come a long way in loosening its grip on humanity, TB is far from eradicated. Every second, someone in the world is newly infected. In the United States, between the mid 80's and 90's, TB cases surged due to expanding prison populations, homelessness, injection drug use, and the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Today, availability and ease of travel from countries where TB is endemic creates opportunities for new infections and the threat of multidrug-resistant TB (MDR TB) keeps public health workers on *red alert*.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes TB for what it is; a global killer. It causes incalculable suffering and claims 2-3 million lives a year. Worldwide, it remains the leading cause of death among young adults. TB anywhere is TB everywhere and eradication will come only with a radical transformation in the way TB is diagnosed, treated, and prevented. The WHO Global Plan to Stop TB is focusing its efforts on five priority areas.

1. Determining why some exposed people get TB and others do not.
2. Developing ways to identify those at highest risk for developing active TB disease.
3. Developing methods to interrupt exposure-to-infection and infection-to-disease.
4. Determining why some people fail to respond fully to treatment.
5. Identifying biological & sociological factors that sustain transmission in populations.

**Suspected & confirmed cases of active TB disease must be reported to the local health department. Ontario County Public Health provides no-cost treatment and case management for those with active TB disease or latent TB infection.**

The TB program coordinator, Lisa Carmer, is available to answer questions and accept referrals; Monday-Friday, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. Call 585-396-4343 or 1-800-299-2995 (toll free).