

City and County of San Francisco TB Control Section

Protocol for Non-adherent Patients on Directly Observed Therapy (DOT): An Interdisciplinary Approach

What should be done when a patient misses a dose?

This protocol has been constructed to serve as a guideline for providing effective care to high-risk, DOT patients being treated for both tuberculosis (TB) and latent TB infection (LTBI).

Anytime a dose is missed:

Everyone (including the DOT registered nurse, registered nurse/public health work case manager, health workers, medical social worker) should:

- Ask the patient what happened and record reason for missed dose
- Encourage the patient to adhere to treatment by motivational counseling and problem solving for future adherence

When a patient misses one dose:

- The DOT nurse alerts the registered nurse/public health work case manager, who makes a telephone call to the patient, reminding him or her to come into the clinic
- If the patient has not come in by 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday or Thursday, the DOT registered nurse or health worker telephones the patient's residence, reminding the patient to come to the clinic before 7:00 p.m. If patient has not come in by 2 p.m. on Friday, DOT registered nurse should have health worker search for patient for delivery

- If the patient is scheduled for delivery and missed, the DOT registered nurse/public health worker can send a health worker out to reattempt delivery
- The social worker should be alerted each time a dose is missed for patients receiving room and board enabler

When there has been no communication with the patient and the patient misses the second dose in a row:

- The registered nurse/public health work case manager alerts the health workers, who should attempt a delivery and, if possible, find out the reason why the patient is not adhering to therapy
- The registered nurse/public health work case manager should consult with the disease control investigator to see if any further action would be appropriate:
 - If patient has a history of incarceration, the registered nurse case manager should also telephone the jails, to see if the patient has been picked up
 - In addition, if patient has significant risk factors for hospitalization, the registered nurse case manager should telephone San Francisco General Hospital to check if patient is in ER or admitted
- The registered nurse/public health work case manager alerts the disease control investigators, who should be ready to search for the patient if the patient fails to show up after 2 days and delivery attempts are unsuccessful
- The medical social worker should attempt to reach the patient and find out why the patient is not honoring his or her contract for special enablers/incentives
- **Remember: helping patients adhere to treatment is a group responsibility. We must all work together when helping patients throughout the healing process**