

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
Acute Communicable Disease Control Program
Nontuberculous mycobacteria (NTM) Reporting Guidance

Updated August 2026



Overview

Nontuberculous mycobacteria (NTM) are Mycobacterial species other than *M. tuberculosis* complex species and *M. leprae*. They can be found in the environment, particularly soil and water. NTM are opportunistic pathogens that can be difficult to treat. While pulmonary NTM infections are common among persons with certain underlying conditions, extrapulmonary infections are less common. Extrapulmonary NTM infection surveillance is used to find healthcare- or procedure- related infections and prevent outbreaks.

Reporting Requirements

Per a [2019 Los Angeles County Health Officer Order](#), confirmed and probable cases of extrapulmonary nontuberculous mycobacteria (NTM) shall be reported by [providers](#) within 7 days of identification.

Instructions

Refer to the [Online Provider Reporting Portal](#) for reporting instructions. **Select “Unusual/Other Disease” and write “Nontuberculous mycobacteria” in the free text field.**

At the time of reporting, include a final lab result and relevant medical records including face sheet, admitting H&P, ID consult notes, procedure notes, and discharge summary (as applicable). To attach supplemental documentation to your report, submit your report and then select “Add to Filing Cabinet” to upload files.

Use the following criteria to determine if/when a case of extrapulmonary NTM should be reported to LACDPH.

Inclusion criteria

A confirmed case is defined as a patient with:

- signs or symptoms¹ referable to the area,
- NTM species or complex² identified in culture or by molecular methods³, and
- a specimen collected from an extrapulmonary site⁴.

A probable case is defined as a patient with:

- signs or symptoms¹ referable to the area,
- mycobacterial species known not to be an *M. tuberculosis* complex (MTBC) organism but lacking species or complex determination⁵, and
- a specimen collected from an extrapulmonary site⁴.

Exclusion criteria

- Pediatric NTM lymph node infections (unless related to dental surgery or invasive procedure)
- Disseminated NTM disease in immunocompromised individuals, including those with:
 - HIV/AIDS
 - Solid organ transplant
 - Bone marrow transplant
 - Cancer
 - End-stage renal disease

Definitions

1. Signs or symptoms typically include fever, fatigue, weight loss, lymphadenopathy*, surgical site infections*, wound infections*, skin infections*, granulomas*, sepsis, failure to thrive, osteomyelitis*, and/or night sweats.
 2. NTM are all Mycobacterial species other than *M. tuberculosis* complex species (e.g., *M. tuberculosis*, *M. bovis*, *M. bovis Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG)*, *M. africanum*, *M. canetti*, *M. microti*, and *M. pinnepedi*), and *M. leprae*. *M. gordonae* from non-sterile sites and *M. ulcerans* should also be excluded.
 3. Positive culture or detection of nucleic acid (e.g., PCR or 16S) specific to a given species or complex of NTM.
 4. Includes specimens from skin/soft tissue, lymph node, wound, urine, or other normally sterile sites (e.g., blood, spinal fluid, abdominal fluid, pleural fluid, or bone). Excludes specimens from the gastrointestinal and respiratory tracts (e.g., lung tissue or sputum).
 5. Positive culture or detection of nucleic acid (e.g., PCR or 16S) for Mycobacterium genus.
- * *Referable to the area from which the specimen was obtained, in which NTM was identified.*

Resources

- [CDC Clinical Overview of Nontuberculous Mycobacteria](#)
- [CORHA Overview of Nontuberculous Mycobacteria](#)
- [CDC Reduce Risk from Water Sources](#)
- [LACDPH Healthcare Outreach Unit](#)