

Study recommends inmate immunity test

July 25 2014

(AP)—Federal experts are recommending that California test inmates for immunity to a sometimes fatal soil-borne fungus before incarcerating them at two Central Valley state prisons where the disease has killed nearly three dozen inmates.

A [federal judge](#) last fall ordered the state to move nearly 2,600 susceptible inmates out of Avenal and Pleasant Valley state prisons because of the deaths and illnesses. The facilities are near Fresno.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says in a report obtained Friday by The Associated Press that using hypersensitivity skin tests could identify inmates who already were exposed to valley fever and could thus safely be housed at the two prisons.

They say that is a better option than the current practice of screening out [inmates](#) who statistically are more susceptible to the fungus.

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Citation: Study recommends inmate immunity test (2014, July 25) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-07-inmate-immunity.html>

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