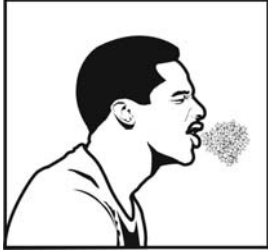


Tuberculosis Facts – TB Can Be Treated

What is TB?



“TB” is short for a disease called tuberculosis. TB is spread through the air from one person to another. TB germs are passed through the air when someone who is sick with **TB disease** of the lungs or throat coughs, speaks, laughs, sings, or sneezes. Anyone near the sick person can breathe TB germs into their lungs.

TB germs can live in your body without making you sick. This is called **latent TB infection**. This means you have only inactive (sleeping) TB germs in your body. The inactive germs cannot be passed on to anyone else. However, if these germs wake up or become active in your body and multiply, you will get sick with **TB disease**.

When TB germs are active (multiplying in your body), this is called **TB disease**. These germs usually attack the lungs. They can also attack other parts of the body, such as, the kidneys, brain, or spine. **TB disease** will make you sick. People with **TB disease** may spread the germs to people they spend time with every day.

If the **TB disease** is in your lungs, you may:

- cough a lot,
- cough up mucus or phlegm ("flem"),
- cough up blood, or
- have chest pain when you cough.

You should always cover your mouth when you cough!

If you have **TB disease**, you may also:

- feel weak,
- lose your appetite,
- lose weight,
- have a fever, or
- sweat a lot at night.

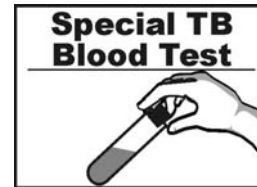
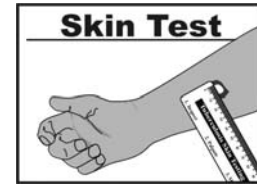
These are symptoms of **TB disease**. These symptoms may last for several weeks. Without treatment, they usually get worse.

If you get **TB disease** in another part of the body, the symptoms will be different. Only a doctor can tell you if you have **TB disease**.

How do I know if I have latent TB infection or TB disease?

If you have been around someone who has **TB disease**, you should go to your doctor or your local health department for tests.

There are two tests that can be used to help detect latent TB infection: a skin test or a special TB blood test. The skin test is used most often. A small needle is used to put some testing material, called tuberculin, under the skin. In 2-3 days, you return to the health care worker who will check to see if there is a reaction to the test. In some cases, a special TB blood test is given to test for TB infection. This blood test measures how a person's immune system reacts to the germs that cause TB.



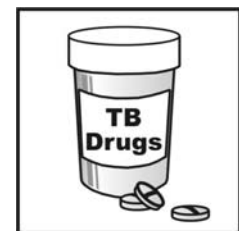
Other tests are needed to show if you have TB disease. An x-ray of your chest can tell if there is damage to your lungs from TB. TB disease may be deep inside your lungs. Phlegm ("flem") you cough up will be tested in a laboratory to see if the TB germs are in your lungs.

If TB disease is in your lungs or throat, you can give TB germs to your family and friends. They can get sick with TB disease. You may have to be separated from other people until you can't spread TB germs. This probably won't be for very long, if you take your medicine as your health care provider instructs.

Can TB be treated?

If you have **TB infection**, you may need medicine to prevent getting TB disease later. This is called "preventive" treatment.

TB disease can also be treated by taking medicine. It is very important that people who have **TB disease** finish the medicine, and take the drugs exactly as they are told. If they stop taking the drugs too soon, they can become sick again. If they do not take the drugs correctly, the germs that are still alive may become difficult to treat with those drugs.



It is very important that you take your medicine as your doctor recommends. It takes at least six months to one year to kill all the TB germs.

Protect your family and friends from TB — take all your TB drugs!

