

TB

Infectious Tuberculosis

Information for people sick
with TB in their lungs

Learn about:

Infectious tuberculosis (TB)

Getting cured

How to keep others from catching TB

Whom to call if you have questions

What does having infectious TB mean?

TB is a serious infectious disease that can be cured

At some time in your past you were exposed to TB germs. It could have been a long time ago or a few weeks ago. The TB germs got into your lungs and are now growing, causing harmful changes.

There are medicines (pills) to help you get better. Taking all your pills as directed, for as long as your doctor tells you, is the only way to be cured.

Without the pills, the TB germs will grow and may move to other parts of your body making you even sicker. If untreated, TB can kill.

3 ways to beat TB



✓ Take care of yourself



✓ Stay on your pill plan



✓ Stop the spread to others

✓ Take care of yourself

✓ Get lots of sleep

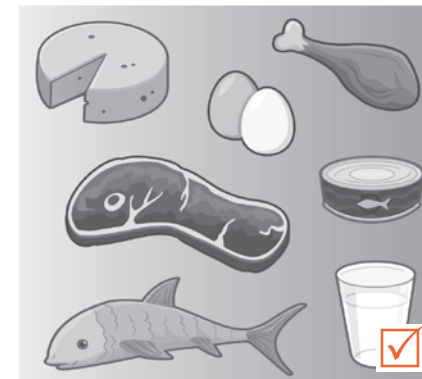
✓ Eat 3 major meals and daily snacks

✓ Eat a mix of foods for energy and strength:

- Meat, fish, eggs, nuts
- Vegetables, fruits
- Milk, cheese
- Bread, rice, pasta

✓ Ask your nurse if you need help with:

- Food
- Housing
- Other services



✓ Stay on your pill plan

3 reasons to stay on your pill plan

1. It's YOUR pill plan

Your doctor has based your TB pill plan on your overall health and the type of TB germs you have.

You need to take all your TB pills until your doctor says you are cured and can stop. Otherwise, you will get sick again.

2. It takes time to cure TB

You may be tempted to stop taking your pills because you start to feel better, but it takes many months to kill all the TB germs. So, you must keep taking your pills as planned to prevent TB germs from becoming drug-resistant.

3. If you don't stay on your pill plan, the TB drugs may stop working, and your illness will be much harder to treat.

See your doctor or nurse right away if the pills are making you feel sick or you have any new concerns.



✓ Stop the spread to others

It only takes a few inhaled germs, too small to see, to infect someone else.

It's important to take steps to protect others.

Understand TB germs

TB germs pass through the air from one person to another.

Each time you cough, sneeze, talk, sing or spit, TB germs can travel through the air. TB germs are not spread by touching people or sharing dishes.

While you are infectious, people you spend the most time with have the greatest chance of breathing in TB germs because they share the same air space with you. TB germs can stay in the air for hours.

Staying away from others during the time you are infectious will help protect them from TB.

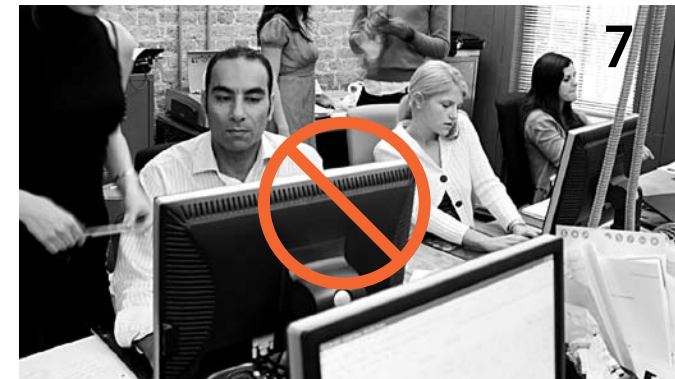
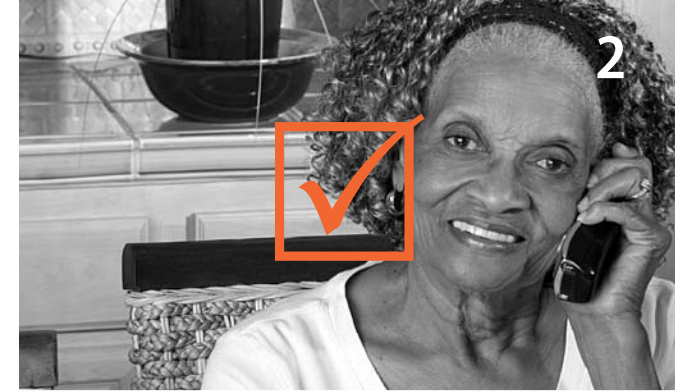


10 key ways...

to stop the spread of TB germs during the infectious time

For most people, these strict measures will not be needed for very long

1. Stay at home away from others (your backyard or going for a walk are OK)
2. Ask people not to visit you
3. Sleep in your own room by yourself
4. Open windows—fresh air scatters the germs
5. Open curtains—sunlight kills the germs
6. Cover your mouth and nose with tissues when you cough or sneeze
7. Stay away from places like work, gym, church and stores
8. Don't take a plane or use public transit like the bus
9. Drive to any medical visits (keep the windows open on the way)
10. Wear a TB mask as directed



Questions & Answers

Question: Do my family and friends need to be checked for TB?

Answer: Yes. A nurse will talk to you about family, friends and others who may be at risk and need to be tested.

Question: Who do I have to be most careful with?

Answer: Everyone, especially young babies and anybody who is sick.

Question: For how long am I infectious?

Answer: Most people with TB in their lungs are only infectious for a few weeks after starting their pills.

If you have been sick with TB for a long time or have other illnesses, you may be infectious longer.

Question: How do I know when I should wear a mask?

Answer: Your doctor or nurse will tell you how and when to wear a TB mask and when you can stop.

People who visit your home will need to wear a mask.

Question: When can I return to my normal activities?

Answer: Your doctor will check if the pills are working.

Testing can include:

- sputum collection
- x-rays
- blood work

When your sputum is free of TB germs you are no longer able to infect others and can be with people again.

Your doctor will confirm this with you.

Vancouver Coastal Health services near you

Vancouver

Communicable Disease Control
800–601 West Broadway
604-675-3900

Vancouver

TB Clinic
Downtown Eastside
569 Powell Street
604-216-4264

North and West Vancouver

Central Community Health Centre
5th floor 132 West Esplanade Avenue
604-983-6700
Ask for the CDC nurse on-call

Richmond

Richmond Health Department
8100 Granville Avenue
604-233-3150

Coast Garibaldi and Bellas

Serving Powell River, Sechelt, Gibsons,
Pender Harbour, Squamish, Whistler,
Pemberton, Bella Bella and Bella Coola

Coast Garibaldi—place office stamp here

British Columbia health services

BC Tuberculosis Control

Vancouver Clinic
655 – 12th Avenue West
604-660-6108

New Westminster Clinic
100 – 237 Columbia Street East
604-660-8826

BCNurseLine – 24 hours a day

Translation help if needed
1-866-215-4700

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Simplified Chinese
Traditional Chinese
Farsi
French
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Punjabi
Spanish
Vietnamese

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