

# TUBERCULOSIS (TB)

## WHAT IS TUBERCULOSIS?

Tuberculosis (TB) is an infection caused by a bacterium called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. When the TB disease is active and multiplying in the body, this is known as TB disease. Only individuals with active TB will experience symptoms.

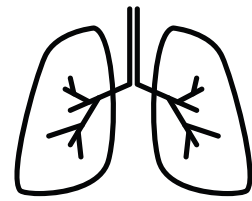
## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

### Latent TB Infection:

- No symptoms
- Cannot spread TB to others
- Skin tests are usually positive
- Chest X-ray is normal

### Active TB Infection:

- Constant cough that lasts 3 weeks or longer
- Chest pain
- Coughing up blood or phlegm
- Weakness
- Weight loss
- No appetite
- Chills
- Fever
- Sweating at night



## HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

TB bacteria are spread through the air from one individual to another. Once someone breathes in the TB bacteria, it will settle in places like the lungs and begin to grow. TB found in the lungs or throat can be infectious.



## HOW IS IT TREATED?

### Latent TB:

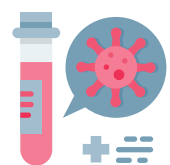
- Since latent TB cannot be passed on to others, treatment is typically simple. The treatment helps reduce the number of growing bacteria to prevent an active infection.

### Active TB:

- To treat TB requires taking drugs for 6 to 9 months. If the medication is not taken as the doctor has recommended, one may become sick again. If medication is not taken exactly as prescribed, the germs that are still alive may become resistant to the drugs.

## PREVENTION

Individuals who are at higher risk of getting TB (healthcare workers, those with HIV, people living in areas with high cases of TB) should be skin tested for TB.



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### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit the CDC here: [Basic TB Facts](#) | [TB](#) | [CDC](#)

*This fact sheet is for information purposes and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care professional.*