

<i>Client:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
<i>Clinician:</i>	

Tuberculosis (TB) is a serious disease caused by bacteria (germs) that can spread from person to person through the air. Most often, TB infects the lungs, but in severe cases, it can also harm other parts of your body. When not treated properly, TB can be fatal.

Who is at Risk for TB

- Have an immune system weakened by medications such as steroids or a disease such as diabetes
- Have close contact with someone who has untreated active TB
- Are elderly
- Live or work in a residential facility, such as a shelter, nursing home, or prison
- Travel to or come from a country where TB is common

Preventing Spread to Visitors & Others

- Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing
- Use disposable tissues & discard in a plastic bag
- Use good hand washing
- Have visitors wear gown and masks
- Screen significant others every 3 months

Signs and Symptoms of TB

There are 2 types of TB- inactive and active.

- Inactive TB
 - Have live TB bacteria in your lungs, but the germs have been sealed off, much like a scab covers a wound. As a result, you don't have symptoms or feel sick. The only way to know you have inactive TB is with a TB test.
 - Can't spread the infection to others.
 - May need medication to keep the infection from becoming active.
- Active TB
 - Have symptoms of TB such as a lasting cough, fatigue, fever, night sweats, and weight loss. You are likely to feel very sick.
 - Can spread the infection to others
 - Must take medication to help cure the disease. Treatment often takes months. TB can be hard to cure.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Contact the on-call nurse if you are experiencing any change in your current health condition.
For ALL emergencies requiring IMMEDIATE medical attention, call 911.

During Treatment for TB

- Make sure to take all the medication as directed, even when you start feeling better. You will take the medication for 6 months or longer. Stopping treatment early means your symptoms may come back. It also helps create germs that are more harmful and harder to kill.
- Get plenty of rest and eat healthy meals.
- If you are taking birth control pills, use an additional backup method of birth control. Your TB medication may make the pill less effective
- Limit your activity to avoid fatigue. Plan frequent rest periods
- Keep your medical appointments. You will need to be checked often to make sure that your medication is working and you are getting better

When to Call Your Nurse or Doctor

- A fever of 100.4°F or higher
- Increased coughing or coughing up blood
- Chest pain or shortness of breath
- Night sweats
- Trouble breathing
- Side effects from medication, such as skin rash, yellowing of the eyes, or stomach problems.

Adapted from *Clinical Pathways for the Multidisciplinary Home Care Team Volume 2* and Krames On-Line

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