

Tuberculosis Facts

"TB" is short for tuberculosis. TB disease is caused by bacteria. The bacterium usually attacks the lungs but can affect other areas of your body such as the kidney, spine, and brain.

How TB Spreads

TB is spread through the air from one person to another. The bacteria become airborne when a person with active TB disease coughs, sneezes, speaks, or sings. Infection can occur when people nearby breathe in the bacteria. **You cannot get TB from casual contact such as sitting in class or passing in the halls.**

How TB is detected

TB can be detected by a positive reaction to a skin or blood test. You will be given other tests to see if you have TB infection or disease.

TB Infection

TB infection is when a person breathes the airborne germs. The germs are sleeping in your body. The germs do not make you sick nor can you spread them to others. Your body is strong enough to keep the TB from growing. One out of ten people who have been infected with TB will develop disease in their lifetime. Preventive medication is encouraged but not required.

TB Disease

TB disease is when your body can not keep the bacteria from growing. You become sick and can give the bacteria to others. Medication is required.

A Person with TB Infection	A Person with TB Disease
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has no symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has symptoms that may include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- a bad cough that lasts 3 weeks or longer- pain in the chest- coughing up blood or sputum- weakness or fatigue- weight loss- no appetite- chills- fever- sweating at night
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does not feel sick	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Usually feels sick
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cannot spread TB bacteria to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May spread TB bacteria to others
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Usually has a skin test or blood test result indicating TB infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Usually has a skin test or blood test result indicating TB infection
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has a normal chest x-ray and a negative sputum smear	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May have an abnormal chest x-ray, or positive sputum smear or culture
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Needs treatment for latent TB infection to prevent active TB disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Needs treatment to treat active TB disease