



Tuberculosis

Reviewed: May 2025
Next review: May 2026
Version 6

> About this leaflet

The purpose of this leaflet is to provide you with information about Tuberculosis, associated symptoms, prevention and treatment options.

> What is Tuberculosis (TB)?

Tuberculosis (TB) is a bacterial infection mostly found in the lungs which can affect any part of the body. TB is almost always curable with a course of medication, usually lasting six months. In most cases only TB of the lungs or throat may be infectious but most people will no longer be infectious within two weeks of starting the correct medication, provided symptoms are much improved.

How is tuberculosis caught?

When someone with infectious TB of the lungs coughs, the germs can get into the air in small droplets and can be breathed in by other people. People most likely to catch TB are those who have spent a lot of time with the person who has TB – usually partners, other people in the same household or, rarely, close colleagues. TB is not spread by sharing objects, e.g. bed linen, dishes.

What are the symptoms?

- Cough which lasts for more than three weeks
- Fever and night sweats
- Feeling unusually tired or ill
- Unexplained weight loss
- Loss of appetite
- Coughing up blood

How is TB diagnosed?

You will be asked to give a sputum sample, and may also have an x-ray and skin test carried out.

What is the treatment for TB?

TB is treated with a combination of antibiotic therapies usually lasting six months. These tablets must be taken regularly and the whole course must be completed. Most people receive all their treatment at home but others may be admitted to hospital for a week or so, particularly if they are very ill or if thought to be highly infectious to other people.

What about people who have been in close contact?

You will be asked by the TB Liaison Nurse to provide a list of the people you spend most time with. The TB Liaison Nurse will contact them and they may be asked to attend a chest clinic for screening.

Can TB be prevented?

The most important and effective way to prevent the spread of TB is to diagnose people with the disease as soon as possible and ensure they have a full course of treatment. There is a vaccination (Bacillus Calmette–Guérin (BCG)) available which is given only to those at higher risk of catching TB. The BCG vaccine does not prevent TB in all cases so you still need to know the signs and symptoms of TB and seek medical advice at the earliest opportunity.

Further information

For further information you can access:

NHS Inform

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/tuberculosis-tb/>

All of our publications are available in different languages, larger print, braille (English only), audio tape or another format of your choice.

我們所有的印刷品均有不同語言版本、大字體版本、盲文（僅有英文）、錄音帶版本或你想要的另外形式供選擇。

كافة مطبوعاتنا متاحة بلغات مختلفة و بالأحرف الطباعة الكبيرة و بطريقة بريل الخاصة بالمكفوفين (باللغة الإنكليزية فقط) و على شريط كاسيت سمعي أو بصيغة بديلة حسب خيارك.

Tha gach sgrìobhainn againn rim faotainn ann an diofar chànanan, clò nas motha, Braille (Beurla a-mhàin), teip clastinn no riochd eile a tha sibh airson a thaghadh.

हमारे सब प्रकाशन अनेक भाषाओं, बड़े अक्षरों की छपाई, ब्रेल (केवल अंग्रेज़ी), सुनने वाली कसेट या आपकी पसंदनुसार किसी अन्य फॉरमेट (आरएफ) में भी उपलब्ध हैं।

我們所有的印刷品均有不同語言版本、大字體版本、盲文（僅有英文）、錄音帶版本或你想要的另外形式供選擇。

ਸਾਡੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਪਰਚੇ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਤਾਬਚੇ ਵੱਡੀਆਂ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਬ੍ਰੇਲ (ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ) ਵਿਚ, ਆਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ 'ਤੇ ਜਾਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਮਰਜ਼ੀ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ।

ہماری تمام مطبوعات مختلف زبانوں، بڑے حروف کی چھپائی، بریل (صرف انگریزی)، سنے والی کسٹ یا آپ کی پسند کے مطابق کسی دیگر صورت (فارمیٹ) میں بھی دستیاب ہیں۔



: **0141 951 5513**