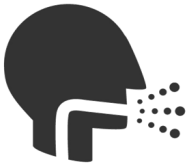




TUBERCULOSIS (TB) is a disease caused by a bacterium called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*.

Tuberculosis (TB) is a disease that is spread from person to person through the air. TB usually affects the lungs. The bacteria are put into the air when a person with TB of the lungs coughs, sneezes, laughs, or sings. TB can also affect other parts of the body, such as the brain, the kidney, or the spine. Tuberculosis is a disease that can be cured if treated properly.

KNOW THE FACTS



The **SYMPTOMS** of TB disease may include:

Feeling weak or sick, rapid weight loss (over a few weeks or months), fever, or night sweats.

Symptoms of TB of the lungs may include cough, chest pain, or coughing up blood. Other symptoms depend on the particular part of the body that is affected.



TB infection is **DIFFERENT** than TB disease.

People with **TB disease** are sick from bacteria that are active in their body. They usually have one or more of the symptoms of TB. These people are often capable of giving the infection to others.

Medications can cure TB disease; usually three or more medications are given to treat TB disease.

People with **TB infection** (without disease) have the bacteria that cause TB in their body. They are not sick because the germ lies inactive in the body. They cannot spread the germ to others.

Medications are often prescribed for these people to prevent them from developing TB disease in the future.

Understanding **TUBERCULOSIS (TB)**



A **SKIN** or **BLOOD TEST** can tell if you have TB infection.

You can get a TB skin test from a doctor or local health department. In 2-3 days, you must return to the doctor who will check to see if there is a reaction to the test. A TB blood test is used to test for TB infection. This blood test measures how a person's immune system reacts to the germs that cause TB. A negative test usually means the person is not infected. However, the test may be falsely negative in a person who has been recently infected (it usually takes 2 to 10 weeks after exposure to a person with TB disease for the skin test to be positive). The test may also be falsely negative if the person's immune system is not working properly.

A positive skin test reaction usually means that the person has been infected with TB. **It does not necessarily mean that the person has TB disease.** Other tests, such as an x-ray, blood test or sputum sample, are needed to see if the person has TB disease.



Call TB Control at 301-583-3110 or visit www.princegeorgescountymd.gov for more information.



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