



COULD YOU
HAVE TB?

Developed by the Royal Borough of Greenwich



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WHAT CAUSES TB?

Tuberculosis (TB) is a bacterial infection that can affect any part of the body but often develops in the lungs.

Only lung TB is infectious - the bacteria are spread through the air when a person coughs or sneezes. Fortunately, **TB is much harder to spread than a cold or flu**, and you need close regular contact with someone infectious to catch it. That is why most people get TB from a family member or partner.

YOU CAN'T GET TB FROM:

- ✗ Someone spitting on the ground
- ✗ Sharing cups, cutlery and plates
- ✗ Sitting next to someone with TB on a bus

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF TB?

The most common symptoms of TB are:

- ✓ **A cough** that lasts for longer than 3 weeks (if the infection is in the lungs)
- ✓ **Fever and night sweats**
- ✓ **Loss of weight** for no obvious reason, and loss of appetite
- ✓ **General feeling of tiredness**

For TB that is not in the lungs, other symptoms will depend on the part of the body that is affected. For example, TB in the spine will cause long-term back pain.

TREATMENT FOR TB

Treatment is free in the UK and in almost all cases will cure the TB.

It is really important to take the tablets as advised by the doctor or nurse, and the whole course of treatment must be completed even though many people feel better quite quickly. Treatment usually takes about 6 months. A person with TB will be admitted to hospital **ONLY** if they are very unwell or have a complicated type of TB.

The family and close friends of someone who is diagnosed with TB (even if it is not in their lungs) will be offered screening. The TB nurses will carry out an assessment of other close contacts if they think that this is necessary and will test anyone who they think might be at risk of the infection. In some cases, this includes workplace, school or college.

1) If you would like further information. Look on www.thetruthabouttb.org or www.nhs.uk/conditions/tuberculosis

WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

If you have the symptoms, OR think that you may have been in close contact with someone with lung TB, it is important that you talk to your family doctor.

If you are not registered with a GP practice, please visit www.nhs.uk to find your nearest one.

Don't delay! Early treatment means early cure – and you won't pass the infection on to others if it is diagnosed quickly. A chest x-ray, a skin test, a sample of your sputum if you are coughing, and sometimes a blood test will confirm whether you have TB.