

If you are in the hospital with TB disease you will be placed on special precautions to avoid spread of the TB disease:

- Single negative air pressure room
- Persons entering the room will wear a mask and also may wear a gown and gloves
- It is important for everyone to wash their hands well with soap and water or alcohol hand rub

When you go home a Public Health nurse may come in to assist you, especially with taking your medicine.

Always tell your doctor or nurse if you have ever had a positive TB skin test or taken TB medication.

If you or your family have questions or concerns, please ask your doctor or nurse.

They can contact Infection Prevention and Control for more information. We thank you for your cooperation.

Remember to always wash your hands!

Handwashing

 1. Wet hands	 2. Soap	 3. Lather for 15 seconds
 4. Rinse	 5. Dry hands well with paper towel or air dryer	 6. Turn taps off with paper towel if available

Always Wash Your Hands

- before and after touching food
- after using the washroom
- after sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose
- after touching pets or handling garbage
- after outdoor activities

 TORONTO Public Health

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Tuberculosis (TB)

Patient and Visitor Information

at St. Joseph's Health Centre, Toronto

Infection Prevention & Control 2010

ST. JOSEPH'S
HEALTH CENTRE TORONTO

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Tuberculosis (TB)

Patient and Visitor Information

What is TB?

Tuberculosis is a disease often called TB. It is spread by tiny germs that can float in the air. The TB germs can spray into the air if a person with TB disease coughs, sings or sneezes.

People nearby can then breathe TB germs into their lungs and get TB infection. People who have TB infection (not TB disease) cannot spread TB to others.

Most people with TB infection will not get sick; however, some people will get sick and have TB disease. TB disease usually attacks the lungs, but sometimes also attacks the kidneys, brain or spine.

TB Infection

How do I know if I have TB infection?

A skin test on your arm will be done. This test is positive if swelling/hardness of the skin (not redness) is the size of a

dime or bigger. If you are HIV positive or your immune system is damaged, this skin test can be negative even if you have TB infection. A CXR will also be done to make sure you do not have TB disease.

How is TB infection treated?

Your doctor may give you medicine to keep the TB infection from becoming TB disease. Isoniazid (INH) is the medicine used most often. This medicine is taken for 6 to 12 months to ensure all the TB germs are gone.

TB Disease

How do I know if I have TB disease?

Symptoms of TB disease are:

- Cough longer than 3 weeks
- Coughing up mucus or blood
- Chest pain when you cough or breathe
- Feel feverish or have chills
- Sweating at night
- Appetite is poor or you have lost weight
- Feel weak

Are some people at greater risk of the TB infection becoming TB disease?

Yes, these high risk people may include:

- Those who have had TB in the past
- Those with lung scars on their CXR
- Those who are HIV positive
- Alcoholics or drug users
- Diabetics and some types of cancer patients
- Underweight persons

How is TB disease treated?

If you have TB disease (not just TB infection) you can spread the disease to others through the air.

You will be given medicine, usually 3 to 4 kinds for at least 6 to 9 months. It is very important that you take all of this medicine. It is also very important that you tell your doctor or nurse if this medicine makes you feel unwell.