

TB: THE FACTS WE ALL NEED TO KNOW!

What is TB?

TB (Tuberculosis) is a disease caused by TB bacteria.



Is TB a common illness?

Yes, it is! In South Africa:

- More than 300,000 people develop TB every year
- More than 50,000 people die from TB every year

That is why all people in South Africa need to know about TB!!

The good news: TB is a disease which CAN BE PREVENTED AND CURED!



How does a person get TB?

- TB is spread through the air, like Covid.
- TB bacteria get into the air when someone infected with TB coughs, talks, sneezes or even sings.



- Anyone close to a person with TB can then breathe the TB bacteria into their lungs.
- If a person has TB and is taking treatment properly, this will kill the TB bacteria, and they will not be infectious to others.

Who can get TB?

ANYONE!

But some people are more likely to get TB, like:



- Close contacts of people with TB, especially children under 5
- People living with chronic diseases that can weaken the immune system - like diabetes, HIV or cancer
- People who work or live in a place where many people have TB – like health clinics, prisons or mines

Who is a close contact of a person with TB?

It is anyone who spends a lot of time with a person with TB:

- Lives in the same household
- Spending lots of time together (visiting for a long time or staying over)
- Share transport regularly
- Work colleagues who work close to each other
- Attend school or classes and sit close to each other



How do you know whether you might have TB?

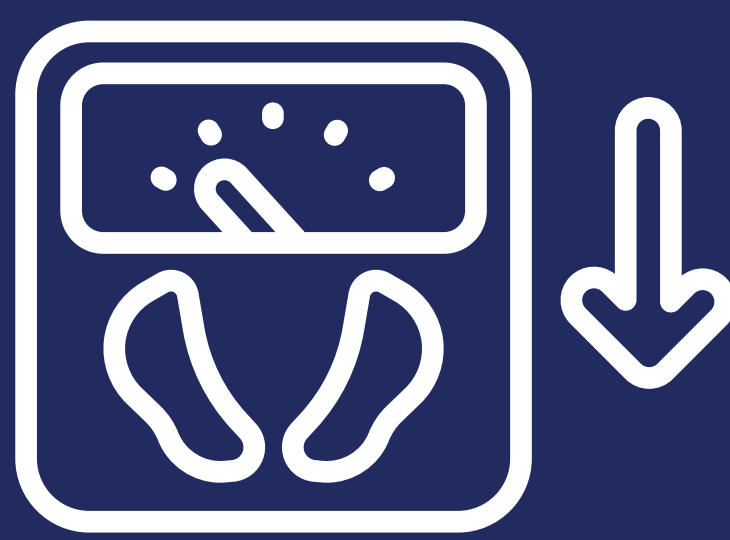
Common symptoms are:



Fever



Coughing



Weightloss



Tiredness



Sweating at Night

But many people with TB do not have any symptoms

Call the helpline 0800 012 322 if you need TB or HIV advice.

**Screen yourself now for TB:
Type "TBcheck in WhatsApp to 0600123456 or dial *134*832*5# (free service)**



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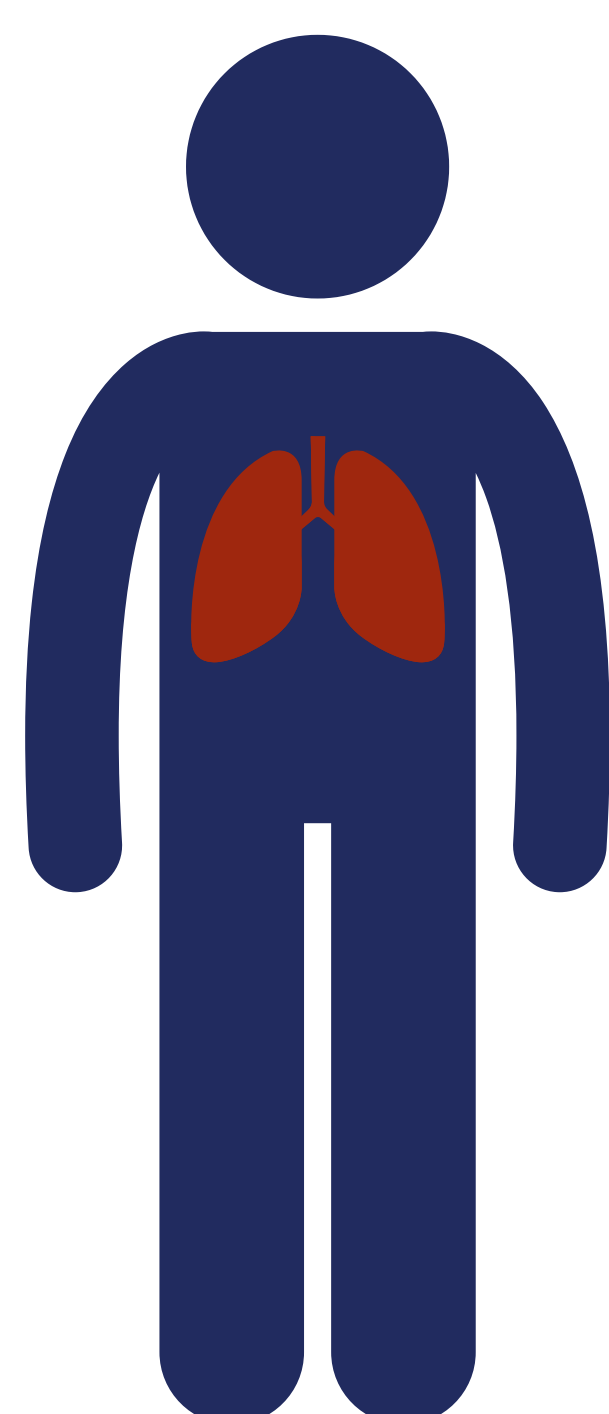
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Some people believe that only a ‘certain kind of person can get TB’, when the truth is anyone that breathes can get TB!



Types of TB:

TB in the lungs = Pulmonary TB:
TB affects one or both lungs. This is the commonest kind.

TB outside the lungs = Extrapulmonary TB:
TB affects parts of the body other than the lungs, such as skin, joints, bones, stomach, glands and the brain (TB meningitis). It can be harder for doctors to find this kind of TB.

Active TB

The TB is active (awake) – usually because the immune system is weak.



The person will usually feel sick with the TB symptoms, but some people do not have symptoms.

Latent TB

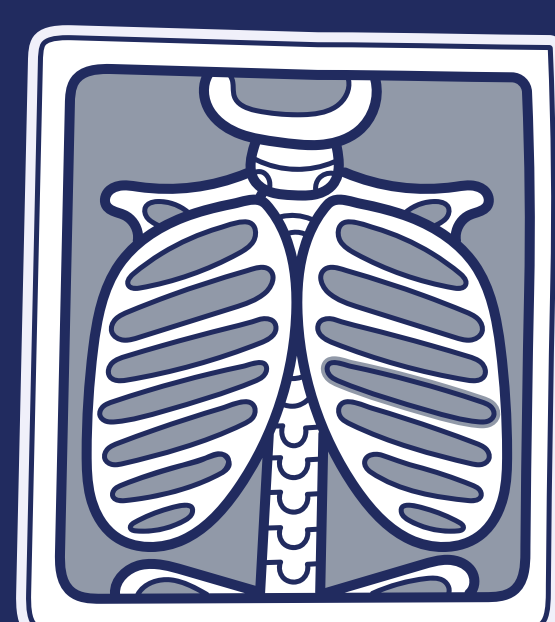
Latent means “sleeping”.

The TB bacteria are in a person’s body but their immune system can keep the TB under control. The person does not feel sick and usually will not infect other people.



What should you do if you think you might have TB?

- Go to your local clinic to test for TB
- You will be asked to cough up sputum (stuff that comes up from the lungs) to send to the lab for a TB test
- You may need to have a chest X-Ray done
- You may be asked to have your urine tested



Where are people with TB treated?



- Most people with any kind of TB are treated at clinics, not hospitals
- It is only people with TB who are very sick who might have to go to hospital and then as soon as they are feeling better, than can get TB treatment at a clinic
- Not all private doctors can treat TB

TB Treatment:

- For most people TB treatment is taken every day for 6 months
- Some people may need to take TB treatment for longer



What is TB Preventative Treatment (TPT)?

TPT is medication that can prevent TB from “waking up” (Latent TB) and making a person sick (Active TB).

Who should take TPT?

TPT should be taken by all close contacts of someone who has TB, and by people classified as “High risks groups” including people who have HIV and people that have had TB.

What should close contacts of a person with TB do?

- Go to your nearest clinic for a check up
- You need to be tested for active TB
- If you have active TB, you will be given TB treatment
- If you do not have active TB, you should take TPT medication for a few months



How is TB linked to HIV?

- People with HIV are more likely to get sick from TB
- Everyone who tests positive for HIV should also be checked for TB
- People diagnosed with TB will be offered an HIV test
- **BUT this does not mean that someone diagnosed with TB has HIV!**



How can TB be prevented?



Cough into your elbow



Open your windows at home, schools, work places!



Wear a mask in taxis or at school or work if you are coughing



Take TPT if you are a close contact of a person with TB

What can YOU do about TB?

- If you or a loved one might have TB or needs TPT, please go to your nearest clinic for a check up
- The sooner a person with TB starts treatment, the better
- TB medicines decrease the amount of TB in the body that can be spread to others, and cures TB
- If you have TB, make sure you finish your 6 months of treatment. This is very important!
- People who have TB **need love, care and support from their family, friends, neighbours and colleagues** to complete their treatment and decrease the spread of TB



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