



TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR TUBERCULOSIS (TB)

What to Expect and How to Stay Healthy



TREATING YOUR TUBERCULOSIS (TB)

If you're one of the many New Yorkers

with TB, finding treatment and support is important. TB is a serious disease, but it's curable with the right treatment. The sooner you start, the better you will feel.

Disclaimer: All photos used are for illustrative purposes only. Any person depicted is a model.



LEARN ABOUT

THE TWO STAGES OF TB

A positive TB test means you have TB germs in your body. Your doctor may do more tests to see if you have latent TB or active TB.

Latent (LAY-tuhnt) TB Infection

Also called "latent TB" or "TB infection"



You do not feel sick



TB test result is usually positive



You cannot spread it to other people

Active TB Disease

Also called "active TB" or "TB disease"



You feel sick



TB test result is usually positive



You can spread it to other people

If you have **latent TB**, the TB germs in your body are "sleeping."

If you have **active TB**, the TB germs in your body are multiplying. Active TB usually affects your lungs, but it can also affect other parts of your body.

When a person with active TB coughs, speaks or sneezes, germs spread through the air. Others who breathe in the germs can get TB.

Signs of active TB:

- Coughing for three or more weeks or coughing up blood
- Feeling tired and weak
- Loss of appetite and loss of weight
- Fever and/or night sweats

ACTIVE TB



Latent TB can become active TB if it's not treated. Even if you don't feel sick, it's important to take your medicine to prevent the TB germs from "waking up" and becoming active TB.

Active TB can make you very sick. Taking medicine will help you get better and keep the germs from spreading to your friends and family. The sooner you start taking medicine, the sooner you'll be able to go back to work or school.

“ A few years ago, I got a positive TB skin test and my doctor told me it was latent TB. I didn't take the medicine she gave me because I felt fine. Last month, I started feeling very sick; I was coughing and had a fever. It turns out I now have active TB. I have to take a lot of medicine, and I might have made other people sick. If I had taken my medicine for latent TB, this would not have happened. ”

- Anila, 28, Queens

MAKE THE MOST

OF YOUR TREATMENT

Some illnesses and medications can weaken your immune system and make it more likely for latent TB to become active TB.

Before and during your treatment for active or latent TB, tell your doctor if you:

- Take other medications
- Have HIV/AIDS, diabetes or other health problems
- Are or might be pregnant soon
- Are breastfeeding

Take all of the medicine prescribed by your doctor. Even if you feel well now or start to feel better, you could start to feel worse if you stop taking your medicine.

- **Skipping or missing doses can make your TB drug-resistant – that means that your medicine can no longer kill the germs in your body. Drug-resistant TB is hard to treat and can take up to two years to cure.**
 - o If you miss only one dose, keep taking the medicine as prescribed.
 - o If you miss more than one dose, talk with your doctor right away.
- **Take extra care of yourself during treatment.**
 - o Don't drink alcohol. Drinking while taking TB medicine can hurt your liver.
 - o Quit smoking. If you need help, call 311 or 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487), or visit nyc.gov/health and search "NYC Quits."

REMEMBER TO

TAKE YOUR MEDICINE



These tips can help:

- Take your medicine as directed by your doctor.
- Keep all of your medicines in the same place.
- Mark each day you take your medicine on a calendar.
- Post a reminder note to yourself in a room of your house, such as the kitchen.
- Set an alarm on your phone or watch.
- Ask family or friends to remind you to take your medicine.
- Talk to your health care provider about directly observed therapy (DOT), a free service that can help you stay on track with your treatment. See page 14 for more information.

UNDERSTAND

THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF TB TREATMENT

Most people take TB medicine without problems, while others have side effects.

If you have any of these side effects, stop taking your medicine and call your doctor right away:

- Nausea, vomiting or no appetite
- Abdominal pain
- Blurred or changed vision
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Skin rash or itchiness
- Tingling in the fingers or toes
- Joint pain
- Urine that is dark or brown
- Fever that lasts for three or more days

TALK

WITH YOUR CASE MANAGER



If you have active TB, a Health Department case manager will support you while you are on treatment. This service is free.

You may have spread TB germs to others, including your family and friends, by coughing or sneezing. Your case manager can help them get tested for TB.

Your case manager will talk with you about:

- Your symptoms
- Places you've visited
- People you've been around

“ My case manager asked for the names of my contacts – the people I spent a lot of time with before starting treatment. My case manager said she needed to call or visit with my contacts to let them know they should be tested for TB. Together, we made a list of who she should call. My case manager promised to keep my identity private. ”

- Carlos, 42, Brooklyn

RESOURCES



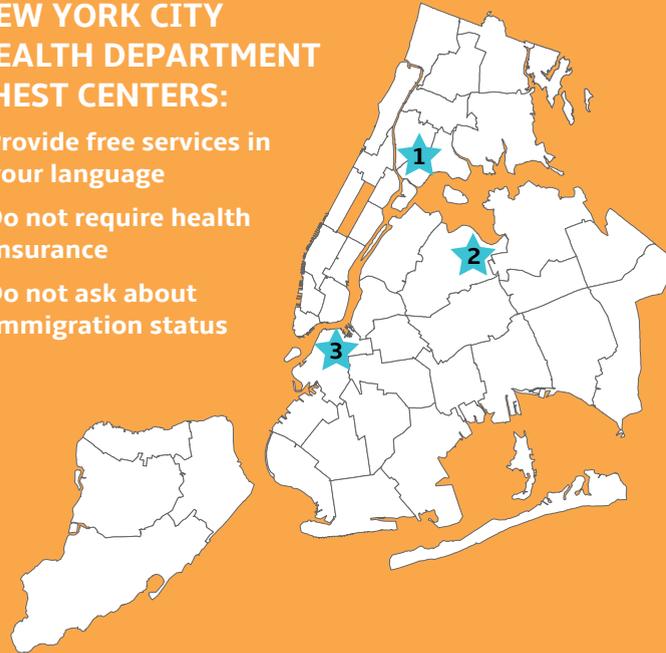
Directly Observed Therapy (DOT): When it's time to take your medicine, Health Department staff can meet with you at work, home, via video conference or at one of the Health Department's TB Clinics. They can answer your questions and help you stay on track with your treatment. To learn more about DOT, including how to enroll, talk to your doctor.

For more information:

- Visit nyc.gov/health/tb
- Call 311 and ask about TB
- Visit cdc.gov/tb

NEW YORK CITY HEALTH DEPARTMENT CHEST CENTERS:

- Provide free services in your language
- Do not require health insurance
- Do not ask about immigration status



1 Morrisania Chest Center
1309 Fulton Ave.,
First Floor
Bronx, NY 10456

2 Corona Chest Center
34-33 Junction Blvd.,
Second Floor
Jackson Heights, NY 11372

3 Fort Greene Chest Center
295 Flatbush Ave. Ext.,
Fourth Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201



