

HIV-Related TB

How to Help Yourself

TB: A Special Risk for People with HIV



Ten years ago, the number of Americans who had TB was going down. But today, TB is on the rise again. People with HIV are at special risk for TB, but most kinds of TB can be cured.

This booklet explains what TB is and how it spreads. It also shows what you can do to help yourself against TB--and to help stop its spread.

What is TB?

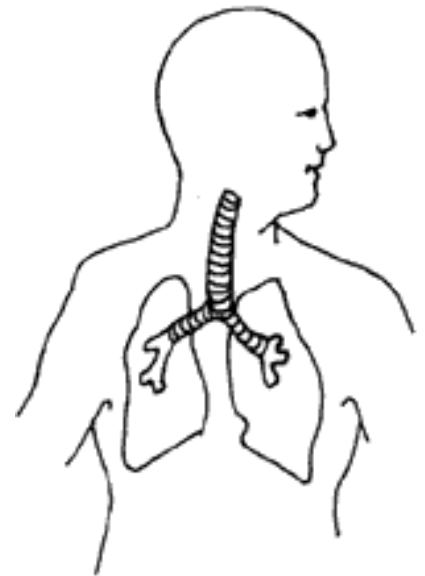
TB is short for tuberculosis, the medical name for the disease. TB can harm the lungs, brain, or spine.

TB germs do not always make you sick, but if you have HIV, you are more likely to become sick with TB disease.

People with TB disease may have some or all of the problems below.

Symptoms of TB Disease

- weakness
- weight loss
- fever
- night sweats
- cough
- chest pain
- coughing up blood



How You Get TB



People can get TB by breathing in TB germs over a long period of time. If you become sick with TB disease, you can pass the TB germs on to others by coughing or sneezing. You should always cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze.

Because TB is spread by germs in the air, close friends and family members of a person with TB should know about TB and be tested for it.

Medicines Can Help You Fight Back

Medicines work well against most TB. They can:

- Keep TB germs from making you sick,
- and
- Cure most kinds of TB disease.

Taking TB medicines can keep you healthy longer and stop TB from spreading.



How To Help Yourself



1. Be tested regularly for TB.

If tests show you have been infected by TB germs, you can take medicine to prevent TB disease. If tests show you already have TB disease, you can take medicines to cure it.

2. Keep taking your TB medicines.

To beat TB, you may need to take medicines for up to a year or more. You must take your medicines! If you stop taking them before you should, TB can come back and be even harder to treat. You will need to see your doctor or clinic regularly to be sure the medicine is working and to check for side effects.

TB Medicine Schedule

Ask your doctor about your medicines. Write down the answers in the spaces below.

Name of Medicine: _____

Times of Day to Take: _____

How Much to Take: _____

How Long to Keep Taking: _____



Research: Hope for the Future



Scientists are studying better ways to check if you have TB and to prevent and treat TB in people with HIV. They want to make it easier to fight TB and keep you healthy longer.

You may be able to take part in one of these studies. You may help yourself and others with HIV.

If you are interested, talk to your doctor or clinic nurse. Or call the numbers below to find out more.

Remember:

- TB disease is a very serious illness that must be treated.
- If you have fever, cough, weight loss, chest pain, or cough up blood, call your doctor or clinic right away.
- If you have TB disease, be sure to ask your doctor or clinic nurse how to avoid giving it to others.
- Take your medicine as directed, and for as long as your doctor tells you to even if you do not feel sick.

To Find Out More

Here are some numbers to call to learn more about TB:

- **1-800-342-AIDS**
(1-800-342-2437)

You can ask questions about TB and get more information. They can also tell you where to get treatment.

- **1-800-TRIALS-A**
(1-800-874-2572)

You can find out about research on TB and HIV -- what studies are going on and where they are.

