

TUBERCULOSIS FACTSHEET

What is TB?

- Tuberculosis (TB) is a bacterial infection, caused by a germ mostly found in the lungs but which can affect any part of the body.
- If TB is not treated it can become very serious.
- TB can be cured

How do you catch TB?

- Only TB of the lungs or throat may be infectious to other people.
- The people most likely to catch TB are those who have spent a lot of time with a person who has TB.
- Exposure to TB germs happens when the germs are coughed into the air and breathed in by another person.
- Generally the TB germ does **not** survive outside the body.
- TB **cannot** be spread by sharing the same cups, cutlery, bed linen or other household items.
- TB sometimes causes no immediate problems but remains inactive in the body for months or even years. Illness can therefore develop some time

after the original infection, particularly if the body is weakened by other medical problems or poor diet.

What are the symptoms?

- Cough that lasts for more than three weeks
- Blood may be present in the sputum (phlegm)
- High temperature
- Sweating at night
- Loss of weight / lack of appetite
- Lack of energy / extreme tiredness
- Tightness of the chest or chest pain

If you develop any of these symptoms in the future you should contact your GP

HIV testing

Most people who have TB in the UK are not also infected with HIV. However, HIV/AIDS and TB go together quite often in some countries. HIV testing is offered routinely to **ALL** patients with TB. You may also be offered testing for the liver infections hepatitis B and hepatitis C.

For further information or advice please contact your local
TB Nurse Specialist

**Gartnavel General
Hospital**

**Catriona Paterson
West Area
0141 232 2161**

**Glasgow Royal
Infirmary**

**Una Lees/Ellen McGeough
North and East Area
0141 211 4958**

**Queen Elizabeth
University Hospital**

**Lesley Ritchie/Lynda Darroch
Renfrewshire/South West Area
0141 451 5862**

**OR
Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board
Public Health Protection Unit
0141 201 4917**



TUBERCULOSIS FACTSHEET GENERAL INFORMATION

