

What is tuberculosis (TB)?

Tuberculosis (TB) is caused by a bacteria (germ) called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. TB bacteria usually attack the lungs (called **pulmonary TB**), but they can attack any part of the body such as the kidney, spine, and brain. Not everyone infected with TB becomes sick. Because of this, there are 2 different TB-related conditions:

- Latent TB infection (LTBI)
- TB disease

If not treated properly, TB disease can cause death.

What is the difference between latent TB infection and TB disease?

Latent TB infection (LTBI)

Many people who have LTBI may never develop TB disease. In these people, the TB bacteria may stay in their body their whole life without causing disease. But in other people, especially people who have a weak immune system, the bacteria may become active, multiply, and cause TB disease.

People with latent TB infection:

- Have no symptoms
- Don't feel sick
- Cannot spread TB bacteria to others
- Usually have a positive TB skin test reaction or positive TB blood test (meaning these 2 tests show that they have TB)
- May develop TB disease if they do not get treatment for latent TB infection

TB disease

TB bacteria become active if the body's immune system can't stop them from growing. When TB bacteria are active (meaning they are multiplying in your body), this is called **TB disease**. People with TB disease are sick. They may also be able to spread the bacteria to people they spend time with every day.

Symptoms of TB disease may include:

- A bad cough that lasts 3 weeks or longer
- Chest pain
- Coughing up blood or mucus
- Weakness or tiredness
- Weight loss
- No appetite (not feeling hungry)
- Chills
- Fever
- Sweating at night

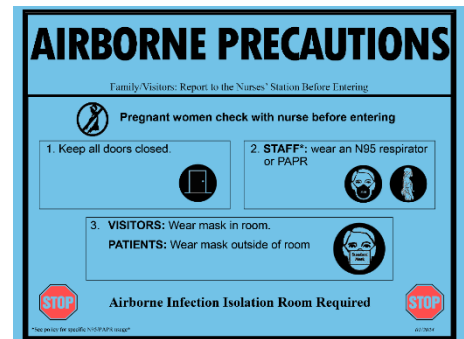
How is TB spread?

TB bacteria are spread through the air from one person to another. The TB bacteria get into the air when a person with pulmonary TB disease coughs, speaks, or sings. People nearby may breathe in these bacteria and become infected.

Why am I being placed into isolation (separated from others)?

While we are waiting on your test results to rule out a TB infection, we will place you under "**Airborne Precautions**" (also called **respiratory isolation**). **Airborne Precautions** are a way to protect other patients, visitors, and staff from getting sick by breathing in the air breathed out by people who have certain diseases.

- You will be in **isolation** (in a space away from others) because you may have TB, a disease that is spread by respiratory droplets. **Respiratory droplets** are extremely small drops of fluid released into the air when someone coughs, sneezes, talks, or breathes.
- Having you stay in a private hospital room helps protect others. This room has a special air system that puts fresh air into the room but stops the air that is in the room from going to the rest of the building. For this system to work, the door to your room must always be closed.
- There will be an Airborne Precautions sign on your door.
- Most staff going into your room will wear a mask for their protection. Every visitor will also have to wear a mask. Our staff will show them how to put it on.



Can I leave my room?

As long as your doctor says that you may have active disease, you need to stay in your room. If you must leave your room for some reason, ask your nurse first. If you leave, you will receive a mask to wear. If you cough or sneeze, please cover your mouth, even if you are wearing a mask.

When will Airborne Precautions end?

You will need to stay in Airborne Precautions until your doctor says you do not have active TB, or there is no longer a risk of you giving TB to other people.

What happens when I am discharged from the hospital?

If you have been diagnosed with TB infection, or if we think it's likely that you have a TB infection, we will let the health department know that you have been discharged and they will follow up with you.

What should I do at home?

Review the “Home Isolation for TB” fact sheet from the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS): tinyurl.com/yckwfe8b

How do I contact the health department?

View this webpage to find your county health department’s contact information:

MDHHS.michigan.gov/CompositeDirPub/CountyCompositeDirectory.aspx

Where can I get more information about TB?

- View the “Tuberculosis Control” webpage from MDHHS: Michigan.gov/en/mdhhs/keep-mi-healthy/communicablediseases/diseasesandimmunization/tb
- View the “Tuberculosis (TB)” webpage from the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention): CDC.gov/tb/communication-resources

Thank you for your help with TB infection prevention and control.

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