



General Authority for Health Services for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi

**Al-Rahba Hospital
Department of Pharmacy**

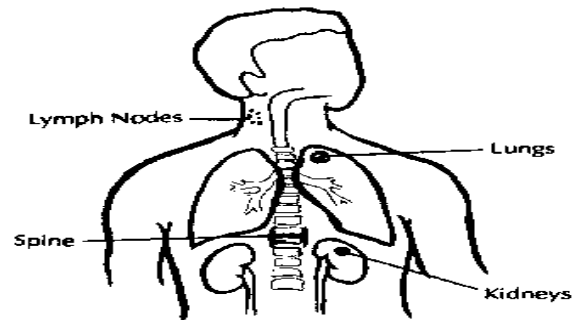


Tuberculosis

Questions and Answers

What is tuberculosis (TB)?

Tuberculosis (often called TB) is an infectious disease that usually attacks the lungs, but can attack almost any part of the body.



Common Sites for Tuberculosis

How does it occur?

TB is caused by a type of bacteria called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. If you have a healthy immune system, in most cases the infection will remain dormant without doing any obvious harm. This stage is called primary infection.

Months or even years later if the immune system is weakened by any cause, the disease can become reactivated in different organs. This is called the disease stage. The lungs are the favorite place for the illness to strike.



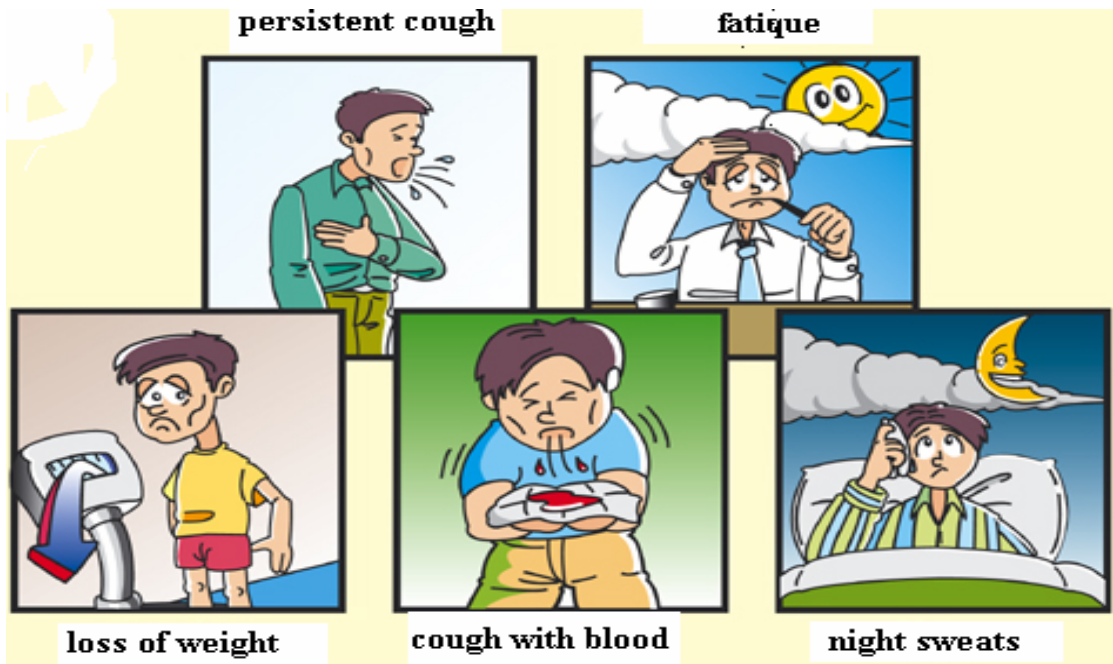
Infected lung with TB germ

How is TB spread?

TB is spread when people, who have active untreated TB germs in their lungs or throat cough, sneeze or speak, and send their germs into the air. People who breathe these germs into their lungs can become infected.

People who breathe in TB germs usually have had very close, day-to-day, contact with someone who has the disease. That's why most people get TB germs from someone they spend a lot of time with, like a family member, friend or close co-worker.

What are the symptoms of TB?



How is TB diagnosed?

Tuberculin (PPD) skin test: Your health care provider will inject a substance called tuberculin, or PPD, beneath your skin. If you are infected with TB, a lump will form where this shot was given within 3 days. This reaction is called a positive tuberculin test.

Chest x-ray: is given if the Mantoux skin test shows that a person has been infected. The X-ray shows if any damage has been done to the lungs.

Sputum test: shows if TB germs are in the thick liquid a person coughs up.

Who should get tested for TB?

- People who have symptoms of TB.
- People who have had close day-to-day contact with someone who has active TB disease (this could be a family member, friend or co-worker.)
- People who have HIV infection, lowered immunity or certain medical conditions.
- People who are required to for employment or school.

Is there any vaccine for TB?

Yes its name BCG vaccine which is routinely given to most children .This vaccine greatly reduces the likelihood of subsequent pulmonary TB.



Can TB Be Cured?

Yes. Today, with modern medicine, in almost all instances, tuberculosis can be cured. Successful treatment of TB depends on close cooperation between the patient and doctor and other health care workers. Treatment usually combines several different antibiotic drugs which are given for at least six months, sometimes for as long as 12 months.

Treatment

The first step in the treatment would be isolating the patient to avoid spreading the disease to his family and other people surrounding him.

How is TB treated?

Treatments for TB depend on whether a person has TB disease or only TB infection. A person who has a TB infection will require Preventive therapy which aims to kill germs that are not doing any damage right now, but could break out later.

In preventive therapy, the usual prescription is a daily dose of Isoniazid (also called "INH") for six to nine months (up to a year for some patients); with periodic checkups to make sure the medicine is being taken as prescribed.

In the case of the TB disease several medicines are necessary because one alone may not kill all the TB bacteria.

Possible medications include:

- Isoniazid (INH).
- Rifampicin.
- Pyrazinamide.
- Ethambutol.
- Pyridoxine.



Patient may need to use such medications for 9 months and some time for 12 months.

What are the common side effects with TB medications?

If you experience any of these side effects notify your doctor or pharmacist immediately.

Isoniazid

- Dark urine
- Skin rash
- Numbness of feet or hand
- Yellowish of skin or eye

Rifampicin

- Skin rash
- Flu-like symptoms

Rifampicin may cause your body fluids (including urine, sweat, and/or tears) to turn orange or red. And may permanently stain soft contact lenses.

Pyrazinamide

- Dark urine
- Yellowish of skin and eye
- Joint aches and skin rash

Ethambutol

- Blurry vision
- Changed color vision

Instructions for TB patient...

1. You must stick with your treatment until you are cured, even if you don't feel sick.
2. It is very important that you take your TB medication exactly as your doctor tells you.
3. It is very important that you keep all your appointments.



4. Dispose any used tissue in a plastic bag and seal the bag before you throw it through the garbage.
5. Cover your mouth and nose when you cough, sneeze, or laugh.
6. Wash your hands after sneezing or coughing or any time your hands are close to your mouth or nose.



7. Eat a well balanced diet.
8. Get plenty of rest.
9. Take your pills on empty stomach but if you experience any stomach upset then you can take them with food.
10. You can take your pills with water, juice, soda, coffee, tea or milk.



11. Other family members, close friends, and co-workers should have a TB skin test.
12. After you are finished with treatment, you will need to have regular check-ups for at least 3 years to make sure the TB doesn't flare up again.