Can I spread TB if I'm infected but don't have the disease?
No. It is very important to remember that only someone with active TB disease in the lungs can spread the germ. *People with TB infection are not contagious, do not have any symptoms, and* ***do not*** *put their family, friends and co-workers at risk.*

Your risk of being infected may be higher if:

- You spent a lot of time with the person
- The person with TB disease was coughing a lot or was very contagious
- You were with the person in an area that was small or poorly-ventilated

TB disease risk factors
TB infection is more likely to develop into disease if:

- You are also infected with HIV
- You became infected with TB in the last two years
- Your body's defense system is weakened by another disease (diabetes, cancer, etc.)
- You are either elderly or very young (under 5 years of age)
- You are taking medications that can weaken the immune system such as chemotherapy, IV arthritis drugs or steroids

TB Control Program
(800) 722-4794
Department of Public Health, County of San Bernardino
351 N. Mountain View Avenue
San Bernardino, CA 92415
www.sbcounty.gov/dph/publichealth/programs_services/communicable_disease_section/tuberculosis.asp

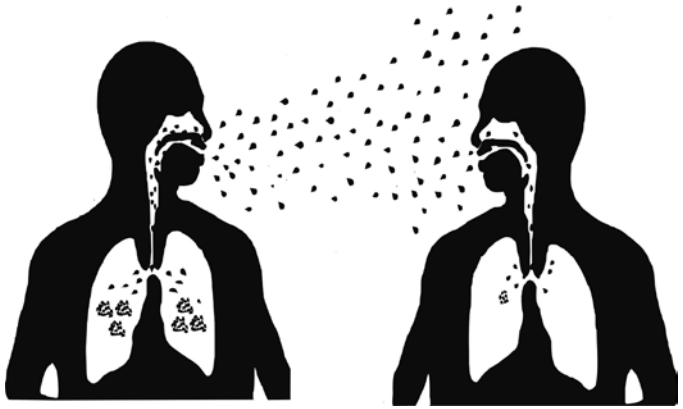
You may qualify for Medi-Cal benefits.
People with TB infection or TB disease may also qualify for TB-Cal. To find out about your eligibility and to request an information packet and application, please call 1-858-514-6885.
Collect calls are accepted.

Adapted from Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Yavapai County Health Department and San Diego County Health Department

HHSA: TB-455 (12/08)

I may be infected with the TB germ…

How can I know for sure?

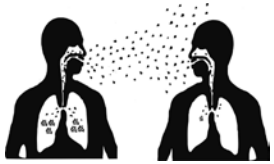


TB
Can be prevented
Can be treated
Can be cured

They tell me I am a "contact" to a TB case, but what does that mean?
You were identified as having been in a place where someone with tuberculosis spent time.

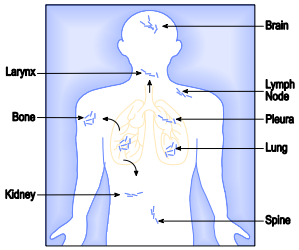
How do you know I spent time with this person?
When we talk to people who have TB, we ask where they went and who they spent time with while they were infectious.

How is the TB germ spread?



- Through the air!
- People can breathe the germs into their lungs.
- TB is NOT spread by sharing forks, knives, linens, clothing or food. It is also not spread by sexual contact or blood.

What is TB disease?
TB disease is the illness caused by TB bacteria. It usually affects the lungs, but can also affect any other part of the body, including the brain, kidneys, liver and spine.



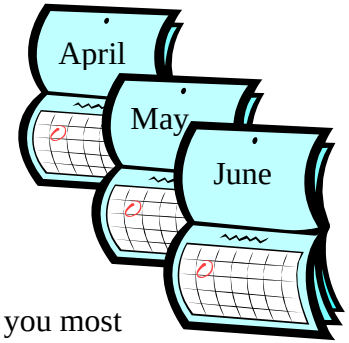
What are the signs and symptoms of TB disease?
You may feel fine at first. However, as TB grows, you may develop symptoms. Some of the most common symptoms are:

- coughing for more than 3 weeks
- coughing up blood or phlegm
- unexplained weight loss
- night sweats
- fever
- fatigue or extreme tiredness

What should I do now?

- Get a TB skin test or blood test. It's simple!
- If the TB test is positive, you will need a chest x-ray and may be asked to take medication to reduce your risk of developing TB disease.
- If you have a record of a past positive TB test or have taken TB treatment, tell your health worker.

If I test negative, is there anything else I need to do?
Yes.



- Because it takes the body several weeks to react to the TB germ, you may need a second test 2-3 months after the first one.
- Keep in contact with your health worker so you can be reminded when 2-3 months have passed.
- If the result of the second test is negative, you most likely do not have TB infection.

Why not just wait 2-3 months before testing me the first time?

- Early detection gives you the opportunity to start treatment for infection as soon as possible.
- Risk of developing active TB disease is usually higher during the first two years after becoming infected. Two tests may help determine if you were recently infected.

And if I am infected, then what?

- There is effective medicine available to kill the germs and to prevent infection from developing into disease.
- Your health worker will assist you in getting evaluated to see if this medicine is right for you.