

Tuberculosis: Get the Facts!

What is Tuberculosis?

- Tuberculosis (TB) is a disease that usually affects the lungs
- TB sometimes affects other parts of the body, such as the brain, the kidneys, or the spine
- TB disease can cause death if untreated

How is TB spread?

- TB germs are spread from person to person through the air
- TB germs are put into the air when a person with TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs, sneezes, laughs, or sings
- TB is NOT spread by sharing silverware or cups, sharing cigarettes, or sharing saliva when kissing someone

What are the symptoms of TB?

- People with TB disease often feel weak or sick, lose weight, have fever, and have night sweats
- If their TB disease is in the lungs, they may also cough and have chest pain, and they might cough up blood
- Other symptoms depend on what part of the body is affected

What is the difference between TB disease and TB infection?

- People with **TB disease** are **sick** from the large number of TB germs that are active in their body
- These people have one or more symptoms and may pass the TB germs to others
- People with **TB infection** also have the germs that cause TB in their body. But they are **not sick** because there are not as many of the germs, and the germs lie dormant (sleeping) in their body
- However, these people could develop TB disease in the future

Who gets TB disease?

Once a person has TB infection, he or she has a higher chance of getting TB disease if the person:

- Has HIV infection
- Has been recently infected with TB germs
- Has other health problems, like diabetes, that make it hard for the body to fight germs
- Uses alcohol or injects illegal drugs
- Was not treated correctly for TB infection in the past

How can I tell if I have TB?

- Get a TB skin test
- If you have a positive reaction you will probably be given other tests to see if you have TB infection or TB disease
- Today, both TB infection and TB disease can be treated and cured with medication

You can get a TB skin test from the Jessamine County Health Department!