



# Tuberculosis

According to the New York State Department of Health, tuberculosis (TB) is a disease caused by a type of bacteria that usually affects the lungs. Other parts of the body can also be affected.

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF TB?

TB symptoms can vary depending on the stage of the infection. Common symptoms include a low-grade fever, night sweats, weakness and weight loss. If TB bacteria are in the lungs, symptoms may also include coughing, chest pain and shortness of breath. TB usually develops slowly, and symptoms may not occur until months or years after infection.

## HOW IS IT TREATED?

Tuberculosis is a serious illness that can affect anyone, including people of any age, nationality or income level. People with TB disease must be treated with at least four different TB drugs, prescribed for six months or more. TB drugs must be taken exactly the way the doctor orders. A person with TB that is not treated adequately can spread TB to other people and can become severely ill and may even die.

## WHAT IS A LATENT TB INFECTION?

Latent TB infection (LTBI) means TB bacteria are in the body but are not active. A person with LTBI is not sick, has no TB symptoms and cannot spread TB to others. The TB bacteria stay in the body, but for most people with LTBI, they will never become active. People with LTBI should be evaluated by their doctors, or TB clinics, and have examinations and chest x-rays taken. To prevent the bacteria from becoming active, LTBI treatment may be prescribed, which must be taken for four to six months or longer.

If you or someone you know has potentially been exposed to TB or are experiencing TB symptoms, it is important to seek medical attention right away to ensure proper diagnosis and treatment.

### For more information, please visit:

<https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/tuberculosis/>

[https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/tuberculosis/docs/fact\\_sheet.pdf](https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/tuberculosis/docs/fact_sheet.pdf)

