

Treating TB: Your Medicine and Safety Guide

Medical-Surgical · Immune & Infectious Disease

TB (tuberculosis) is a lung infection that spreads through the air when you cough or sneeze. Taking every dose cures TB and protects the people around you.

Take every dose

- Take your TB medicines for the full 6 to 9 months, or as long as your provider says.
- **Do not stop when you feel better.** Stopping early lets TB come back stronger and harder to treat.
- A health worker watches you take each dose, in person or by video. Keep every visit.

Protect others while you are contagious

- Your provider tells you when you no longer spread TB, usually after 2 to 3 weeks of treatment.
- Until then, stay home. Do not take buses or trains. Do not have visitors.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Wear a mask around others.
- Open windows to let in fresh air.
- Your family and close contacts need TB tests too.

Know your medicines

- Rifampin turns urine, sweat, and tears orange. This is normal.
- Wear glasses, because rifampin stains soft contact lenses.

- Rifampin makes birth control pills work less well. Use condoms too.
- With isoniazid, do not drink alcohol. Take vitamin B6 if prescribed.

Give sputum samples

- Rinse your mouth with plain water first.
- Cough up mucus from deep in your lungs first thing in the morning.
- These tests show that your medicine is working.

Call your provider today if you have

- Yellow skin or eyes, or dark urine
- Nausea, vomiting, or belly pain
- Numbness or tingling in your hands or feet
- Blurry vision or trouble seeing colors

Call 911 or your local emergency number if you have

- Coughing up a lot of blood
- Severe trouble breathing
- Chest pain with trouble breathing
- Swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat

This handout supports, not replaces, advice from your own nurse or doctor.

Online: nclxpath.com/patient-education/tuberculosis-treatment/patient

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