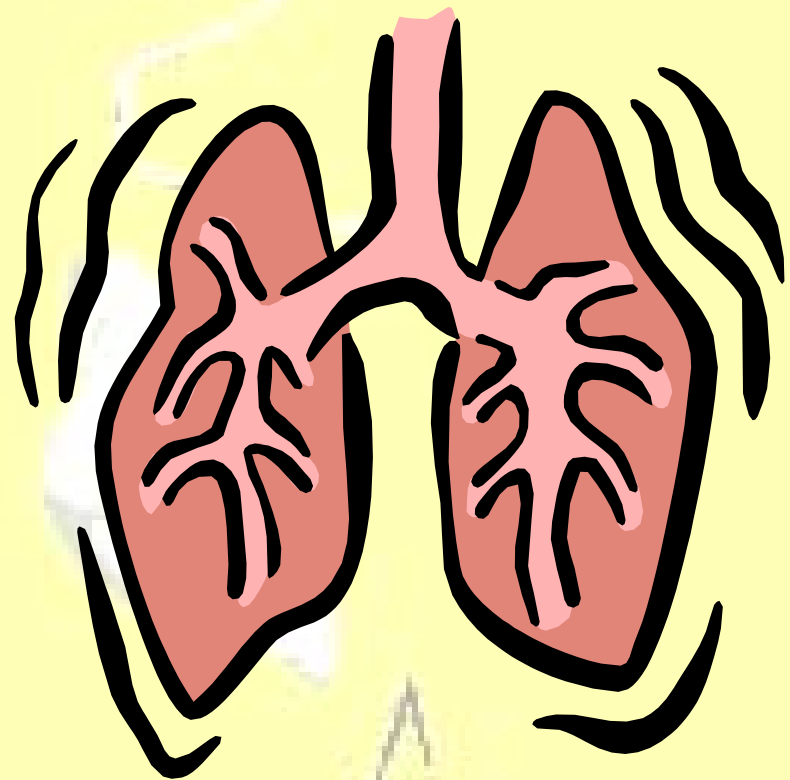


What Drug Treatment Centers Can do to Prevent Tuberculosis

- **Tuberculosis (TB) is alive and well**
- **Learn what you can do to prevent TB among your clients and protect yourself!**



Transmission



- TB is spread through the air from person to person by infectious airborne droplets called tubercle bacilli.
 - Cough
 - Sneeze
 - Speak
 - Sing

What is latent TB infection?

- In most people who breathe in TB bacteria and become infected, the body is able to fight the bacteria and stop it from growing. The bacteria become inactive, but they remain alive in the body and can become active later.
- People with latent TB infection
 - Have no symptoms
 - Don't feel sick
 - Can't spread TB to others
 - Usually have a positive skin test reaction
 - Can develop active TB disease if they do not receive treatment for latent TB infection.

What is active TB disease?

- TB bacteria become active if the immune system can't stop them from growing. The active bacteria begin to multiply in the body and cause active TB disease. The bacteria attack the body and destroy tissue. If this occurs in the lungs, the bacteria can actually create a hole in the lung.
- **Symptoms**
 - **A bad cough that lasts 3 weeks or longer**
 - **Pain in the chest**
 - **Coughing up blood or sputum (phlegm from deep inside the lungs)**
 - **Weakness or fatigue**
 - **Weight loss**
 - **No appetite**
 - **Chills**
 - **Fever**

Tuberculosis Infection

An estimated 10 to 15 million persons (4% to 6% of the population) have **INACTIVE TB** (no disease).

TB without the disease

- Cannot spread infection to others
- Is not considered a case of TB
- Usually has, as the only evidence of infection, a positive reaction to the tuberculin skin test
- Usually has a negative chest x-ray and no symptoms of TB
- Has TB bacteria in his or her body that, although inactive, remain capable of causing disease at any time later in life.

What conditions make a person at higher risk for TB?

- **Substance abuse** (especially intravenous drug use)
- **Human immunodeficiency virus** (HIV positive)
- **Weakened immune systems from**
 - substance abuse
 - diabetes mellitus
 - silicosis
 - cancer of the head or neck
 - leukemia or Hodgkin's disease
 - severe kidney disease
 - low body weight
 - certain medical treatments (such as corticosteroid treatment or organ transplants)
 - specialized treatment for rheumatoid arthritis or Crohn's disease

How do people know if they have TB infection or TB disease?

- A skin test is the only way to tell if you have a TB infection. The test is “positive” if a bump about the size of a pencil eraser or bigger appears on your arm. This bump means you probably have TB infection.
- Other tests can show if you have TB disease. An x-ray of your chest can tell if there is damage to your lungs from TB. Phlegm you cough up will be tested in a laboratory to see if the TB germs are in your lungs.
- If TB germs are in your lungs or throat, you can give TB infection to your family and friends.

Can TB disease be cured?

- YES! TB disease can be cured by using special drugs that kill TB germs. But TB germs are strong. It takes at least six to nine months of medication to wipe them all out. It is very important that you take all your medication.
- If you stop taking medication too soon, it is a big problem. The TB germs that are still alive become even stronger. You may need stronger drugs to kill these “super” TB germs.

Stay Healthy!

- Get tested yearly if you work with any high-risk populations.

