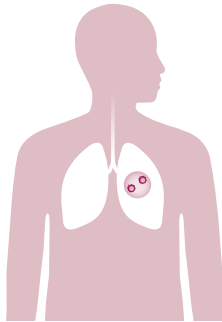


The bacteria that cause tuberculosis (TB) can sometimes pass from one person to another through the air.

Some people who have TB can pass it on to other people, but many others can't:

1 People who have 'latent' TB infection and do not feel unwell cannot pass TB on to other people.

A person with latent infection has TB bacteria in their body, but their immune system is keeping it under control.

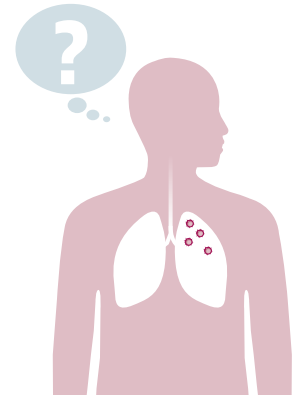


2 People who are ill because of TB infection in the lungs or throat can pass TB on to other people.

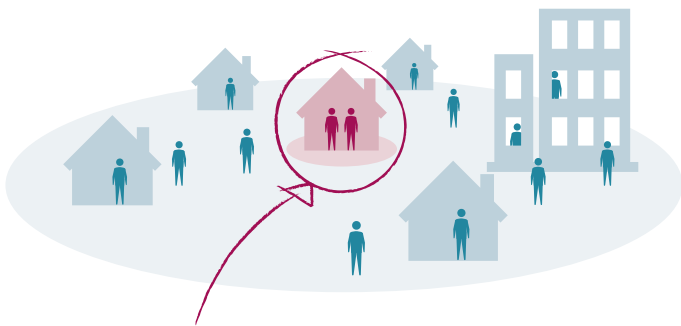
When the person coughs or sneezes, TB bacteria are released into the air in tiny drops. Other people may breathe these drops in.



3 Some people who have TB do not know that they have it.



4 People who spend a lot of time with a person who has TB may be at risk of getting TB themselves.

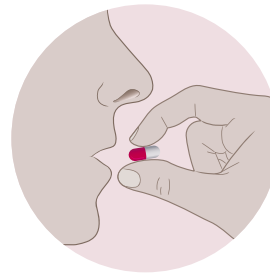


People who live in the same house or flat should see a doctor for a TB test.

It's rare for other people such as friends or work colleagues to catch TB.

5 TB treatment reduces the risk of passing the bacteria on.

After a few weeks of effective treatment, there's usually no risk to other people.



Important points

- TB bacteria are spread through the air when a person who is ill with TB coughs or sneezes.
- Many people who have TB are not infectious.
- Only people who spend a lot of time with a person with TB are at real risk of infection.

Notes

When someone is ill with TB in the lungs, the risk of passing the infection on can be reduced by doing the following:

- Covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- Washing hands regularly with soap and warm water.
- Not going to work or school.
- Putting used tissues in a bin or bag.
- Keeping windows open.
- Not sleeping in the same room as other people.



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