

Tuberculosis and HIV

What is TB (Tuberculosis)?

TB is caused by a bacterium. It infects the lungs, but can also enter the blood and infect almost any part of the body. This includes the liver, kidneys, stomach and gut, bones, skin, breasts, brain and spinal cord.

How is TB spread?

TB is spread through the air from one person to another. The TB bacterium can be easily inhaled. TB cannot be spread by clothes, dishes, food or body contact with someone who has TB.

Signs and symptoms of TB of the lungs include:

- Coughing that lasts three or more weeks
- Coughing up blood
- Chest pain, or pain with breathing or coughing

HIV and TB

- People with HIV are more likely to get TB and more likely to have TB active in the body. Having HIV makes it difficult for the body to control TB bacterium, since HIV compromises the immune system.
- TB is one of the leading causes of death among people with AIDS, especially outside the United States.

TB Screening

TB screenings can be completed at a doctor's office with a skin or blood test, and/or chest x-ray. **People with HIV should have an annual TB screening.**

Further testing

If the results of a TB test are positive, you may need further tests to see whether you have active TB disease and whether TB is resistant to antibiotics.

How is TB prevented?

The best way to control TB is to diagnose and treat people with the infection before it enters the active phase. Avoid prolonged interactions with anyone you know who has TB, since it increases the risk of transmission.

How is TB treated?

TB disease can be treated by taking several anti-TB medicines. It is important that all anti-TB medications are completed and taken the way they are prescribed by your doctor. It takes at least 6 months to 1 year to kill all the TB germs in your body. If you stop taking the medicines too soon, you can become sick again. If you do not take the medicines correctly, the bacteria that are still alive in the body may become difficult to treat. If you suspect that you may have contracted TB contact your doctor immediately and get tested.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For information and services please call Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Tuberculosis Control Program at **213.744.6160**.

For treatment information visit www.cdc.gov/tb/topic/treatment/

For testing information visit www.cdc.gov/tb/topic/testing/

If TB services are not delivered appropriately, please contact OAPP's warmline @ (800) 260-8787.