



TB BASIC FACTS SHEET (INCLUDING MDR TB + XDR TB)

SOME KEY FACTS THAT EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT TB

- TB can be prevented
- TB can be cured

What is TB?

TB is a disease caused by a germ called Mycobacterium Tuberculosis. The germ usually attacks the lungs, but can attack any part of the body, such as the kidney, spine and brain. If it is not treated properly, TB can kill. TB is spread through the air from one person to another. The germs get into the air when someone with TB infection coughs, sneezes or spits. Then other people can breathe in the TB germs. The chances of getting TB are increased when the body's defenses are lowered because of:

- Diseases like diabetes and HIV and AIDS
- Excessive alcohol intake and smoking
- Lack of proper nutritious meals (food)
- Stress
- Living in poorly ventilated, overcrowded rooms.

How do you know if you have active TB? (Symptoms include):

- Coughing for two weeks or more
- Sweating at night
- Loss of weight
- Loss of appetite
- Tiredness



If you cough for two weeks or more go to your nearest clinic for a free TB test and treatment.

As with HIV testing the company is using a private service provider to ensure that your medical condition is confidential.

RAPID TB ANTIBODY TEST, available in South Africa.

In the event of a disclosure of active TB by a colleague or employee we have in the past not been able to do very much to determine if other employees had been exposed to the TB bacterium. This was so due to the difficulty to detect TB before it becomes active. In other words only Active TB would show up on a sputum test or TB X-ray.

THINGS HAVE NOW CHANGED WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SMART CHECK TB RAPID TEST.

A rapid TB diagnostic test device is now available in South Africa through local manufacturers and distributors, which complies with US FDA regulations and approvals.

The test is affordable, simple to use, rapid, and performed by a simple pin prick. The rapid test uses a qualitative detection of Mycobacterium tuberculosis infection in whole blood or serum. (In simple terms it identifies antibodies to active, pulmonary M. tuberculosis).

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

If it is suspected or known that colleagues or other employees have been exposed to TB the rapid test can be used to determine who else has been exposed. This then means that the exposed individual can undergo further testing and receive prophylactic treatment immediately before developing active TB and hence they do not need to wait until they develop active TB to take action. Active TB puts others at risk of further exposure. By being proactive we will be able to stop TB.

What is MDR or XDR TB?

If you have TB and interrupt or do not complete your treatment you will develop a more difficult to cure type of TB called MDR TB (Multi Drug Resistant TB).

You can also get MDR TB from someone who already has it.

The symptoms are the same as for 'ordinary' TB, and it is spread the same way.

There were about 650 000 cases of MDR-TB present in the world in 2010. It is estimated that about 9% of these cases had XDR-TB. Annually, about 440 000 fell ill with MDR-TB and 150 000 died due to this form of tuberculosis.

Treatment for MDR TB

- Treatment takes up to two years.
- You will stay in hospital for at least four to six months.
- For the first four months pills and injections will be administered daily.
- It is important to take all the pills and injections, because they work together to kill the TB germs.
- Although an HIV positive status exacerbates the condition, MDR-TB can still be cured.
- Failure to complete the course of medication will result in the development of XDR-TB (Extremely Multi Drug Resistant TB) strain.



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- Treatment is available for both MDR and XDR TB but as with MDR it takes a very long time and extensive hospitalization.

The important message from the Department of Health is that TB is curable.

People with TB need our support!

Let us support people who are on TB treatment and assist them to take their medication correctly and complete the course.

Once a person with 'ordinary' TB has been on treatment for 14 days the risk of exposure to other people is greatly reduced but then it is important that the TB infected person continues to use and complete the TB treatment.

TB and HIV

- HIV infection lowers the body's ability to fight infections, like TB
- Not all HIV positive people have TB
- Not all people with TB have HIV
- If you have been diagnosed with TB you should be tested for HIV
- Even if you are HIV positive, TB is fully curable.

Use this list to find out where you can receive free TB testing offered by the Department of Health provincial health offices:



You can obtain further pamphlets and information on the management of TB from the Department of Health Website: <http://www.tbonline.info/archive/document/5/>



Visit the World Health Organization website for details on TB interventions and particularly a very concise one page document detailing the **STOP TB STRATEGY**: http://www.who.int/tb/strategy/stop_tb_strategy/en/index.html

Other TB Info Websites:

- <http://www.santa.org.za/>
- <http://www.worldtbdays.org/>
- http://www.stoptb.org/events/world_tb_day/2014/

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Positively Alive offers HIV AIDS, TB and Other Health and Wellness discussions and awareness presentations, please contact us for a quotation or more information.

For more information about TB and drug-resistant TB, contact the national or provincial health office:



National TB Control Programme
012 312 0089

Eastern Cape
040 608 1408/0828

Free State
051 408 1429

Gauteng
011 355 3098

KwaZulu-Natal
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