

# How Do I Talk to My Healthcare Provider about Inactive Tuberculosis (TB)?

## A Conversation Guide for Patients

Tuberculosis (TB) germs can live in your body for years without causing symptoms. This is called inactive TB or latent TB infection. Inactive TB can become active TB disease at anytime and make you sick. Once inactive TB becomes active TB disease, TB can spread from person to person through the air. Starting a conversation with your doctor is the first step to protecting your family, friends, and community from this highly contagious disease.

**Here are some tips for talking with your healthcare provider about inactive TB during your next visit.**

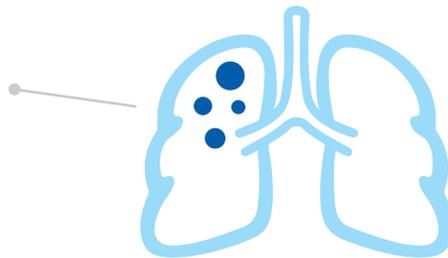
### 1 **Think** Discuss Your Risk

**TB is a leading cause of deaths worldwide, and too many people still suffer from TB in the United States.** There are several risk factors for TB so it's important to talk with your healthcare provider about your risk.

**Anyone can get TB, but you have a higher risk for TB if you:**



were born in or frequently travel to countries where TB is common, including those in Asia, Africa, and Latin America



recently spent time with someone who has active TB disease



live or used to live in large group settings where TB is more common, such as homeless shelters, prisons, or jails



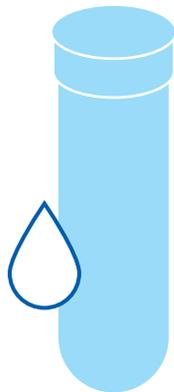
work in places with high risk for TB transmission, such as hospitals, homeless shelters, correctional facilities, and nursing homes



have a weaker immune system because of certain medications or health conditions such as diabetes, cancer, and HIV

## 2 Test Understand the Testing Process

There are two types of tests for TB infection. Talk with your healthcare provider about which test is best for you.



TB Blood Test

Your healthcare provider may recommend the TB blood test because it can be done in one visit, and it's more accurate if you've been vaccinated for TB in the past. The blood test measures how your immune system reacts to the germs that cause TB.



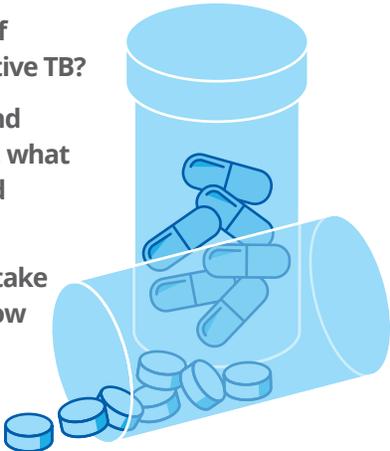
TB Skin Test

For the skin test, a small needle is used to put some testing material under the skin. You will need to return to your healthcare provider in 2-3 days to see if there is a reaction.

## 3 Treat Discuss Treatment Options

If you are diagnosed with inactive TB, there are several short and convenient treatment options available that can help protect you from getting sick with active TB disease.

Here are a few questions to ask your healthcare provider about treatment options:

- What are the benefits of getting treated for inactive TB?
  - Based on my lifestyle and personal health history, what treatment option would you recommend?
  - How often do I need to take this medication? And how long will I be on it?
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- What are the instructions for taking this medication?
  - What are the side effects of this medication?
  - What is the cost of this medication? Will my insurance cover treatment?
  - Are there any community resources that can support me in my treatment plan?

Without treatment, 1 in 10 people with inactive TB will get sick in the future. Even if you feel healthy now, inactive TB can develop into active TB disease and make you sick.



To learn more about TB and how you can protect yourself and others, visit [www.cdc.gov/thinktesttreattb](http://www.cdc.gov/thinktesttreattb)