

Tuberculosis (TB) Frequently Asked Questions – FAQs

What are the investigations done for diagnosing TB and where are they available?

It is essential to get sputum examined on three consecutive days for TB bacteria in order to diagnose TB. DOTS centres have been established at various places. The services provided at these centres are absolutely free.

Sputum for examination should be given after coughing properly. It is important not to give saliva in place of sputum. If saliva is submitted for examination, the disease may not be diagnosed.

Is the disease of TB curable?

Yes, this disease is fully curable if the treatment is taken on a regular and continuous basis for adequate duration (minimum period of six months continuously).

What is the diet to be given to a TB patient?

As per one's liking, TB patient can eat any type of food. There are no special diets necessary for a TB patient. One should avoid any foodstuff which causes any problem in that particular individual.

What is DOTS?

DOTS stands for directly observed treatment short course, the curative treatment for tuberculosis. It is the name for a comprehensive strategy which primary health services around the world are using to detect and cure TB patients.

What are the advantages of DOTS

- DOTS produces cure rate high as 95 percent.
- DOTS guarantees quicker and surer relief from the disease.
- DOTS is a strategy for alleviating poverty. Saving lives, reducing the duration of illness, and preventing new infectious cases would mean fewer years of employment lost.
- DOTS prolongs survival of HIV-Infected TB patients.
- DOTS prevents treatment failure and the emergence of multi-drug resistant tuberculosis by ensuring patient compliance and uninterrupted supply of anti-TB drug.
- DOTS is available for free at all Health Centres.

How TB & HIV are related?

Anyone can become infected with TB, but people with HIV are at greater risk of getting sick with TB disease. As the immune system is weakened by HIV, the bacteria can start growing and multiplying. It then becomes TB disease.

Tuberculosis Dos and Don'ts

Do's	Don'ts
Have 2 sputum examinations done if you have cough of three weeks or more. These tests are done free of cost at Government sputum microscopy centers.	Don't avoid medical care if you have cough of three weeks or more.
Take all the medicines for the full prescribed period on regular basis.	Don't rely only on X-ray for diagnosis of TB.
Understand that TB can be cured.	Don't stop medicines before your physician discontinues them.
Use handkerchief when coughing or sneezing.	Don't spit indiscriminately.

Reference: Micromedex's Care Notes System Online 2.0