

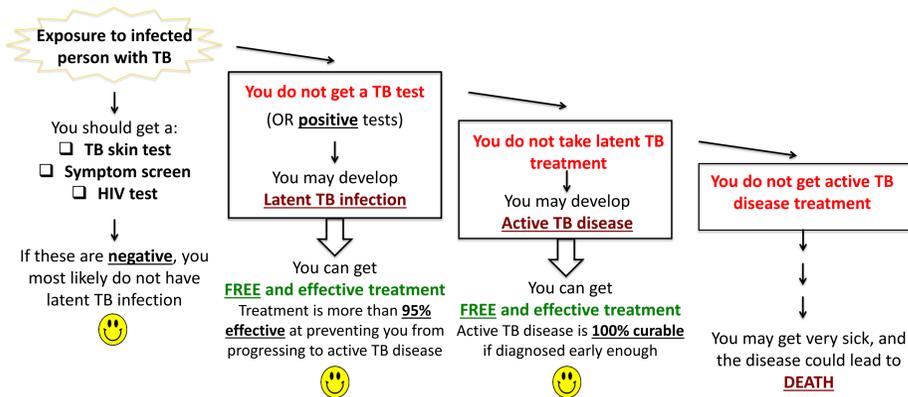
What you Need to Know about TB

- Tuberculosis (TB) is caused by a germ that usually affects the lungs, but can also damage the kidneys, spine and brain. If left untreated, active TB can lead to death.
- **There were more cases of active TB disease in Atlanta among the homeless in 2014 than in ANY other year in the past decade.**
- About one-third of people who have active TB disease are HIV-positive.
- Almost all cases of active TB disease to date have been diagnosed during the **late stages** of the disease.
- Recognizing the symptoms of TB disease and getting treated early can help stop the spread of TB.

Covering your cough **STOPS the transmission of active TB!**

How could I get exposed to TB?

- TB is spread by the air, which means that you can get TB by spending a long time with an infected person who is coughing, sneezing or talking close to you.
- After you have been exposed to someone infected with TB, it can take weeks to develop into infection, and years to develop active TB disease.
- People living in homeless shelters are more likely to be exposed to TB, and more likely to develop TB disease after being exposed.



Am I at risk for getting infected with TB?

- If you spend a long time with a person with TB disease
- If you spend a long time in poorly ventilated spaces (for example, an area with closed windows and/or no fans)
- If you are around persons with TB disease who do not cover their cough or do not receive treatment

Am I at risk for developing TB disease?

People who are at higher risk for developing active TB disease include:

- People who are HIV-positive
- People with other medical conditions, such as diabetes
- People who use alcohol or drugs (heroin, cocaine, crack)
- People with a **positive TB skin test who did not seek treatment**

Signs and symptoms of TB

Signs and symptoms of TB infection include:

- **A bad cough that lasts for more than 3 weeks**
- **Chest pain with breathing**
- **Coughing up blood or phlegm**
- **Feeling more tired or weak**
- **Weight loss without explanation**
- **Daily fevers or chills**
- **Drenching night sweats**



★ If you have a **chronic cough AND at least one other symptom**, seek out TB evaluation at a TB clinic or local clinic.

What is the difference between active TB disease and latent (sleeping) TB infection?

- **Active TB** means that you have TB, you feel sick, and you are contagious. You may have a positive or negative TB skin or blood test. If you don't get medicine and you have active TB, you can die.
- **Latent (Sleeping) TB** means that you have the germ, but it is not making you sick right now. If you have latent TB, you will probably have a positive TB skin or blood test.

Latent TB may lead to active TB and **should be treated** to prevent TB disease!

	Active TB	Latent TB
Feeling sick?	✓	✗
Contagious?	✓	✗
Skin test result?	Positive or negative	Likely positive
Chest x-ray result?	Abnormal	Normal
Treatment available?	✓	✓

What does a positive skin test mean?

- A positive skin test means that you have been exposed to TB, and that you may:
 - 1) currently have or previously had latent TB infection, OR
 - 2) have active TB disease.
- If you have a positive skin test, you should seek out TB evaluation. Your test will stay positive after treatment.

How could I get treated for TB?

- Treatment of active or latent TB involves a set of medications that must be taken on a regular basis. Treatment usually lasts about 4 months to treat latent TB infections and 6-9 months to treat active TB disease.
- If an individual stops medication early, he or she may get sick again or may be at risk for spreading the disease to other people.
- These medications are **FREE** for those diagnosed with TB.
- County Health Department TB programs will follow up with individuals on a treatment plan and provide TB medications.
- They also offer **free medical exams** and **free housing** for homeless TB patients.



If I was treated for latent TB (a positive skin test), can I still get infected with TB?

- If you have completed the **full treatment** course for latent TB, you will not progress to develop active TB disease. However, you are not protected (like a vaccine) from a new exposure to TB.

How can I protect myself from getting TB?

- Encourage those around you to cover their coughs and sneezes** using a tissue or the inside of their arms.
- Try to **spend time outside or in well-ventilated areas**.
- Keep children and the elderly away** from people who may have TB disease.

Go to your local clinic or **Fulton County TB clinic** for evaluation if you know you have been exposed to someone with TB

TB Clinic and Contacts

Fulton TB Clinic, 99 Jesse Hill, Jr. Drive (404) 613 – 1450

GA State Nurse Educator (404) 657-2634

Fulton Co. Health Liaison Coordinator (404) 613 – 1244

Southeastern National Tuberculosis Center (888) 265 – SNTC (7682)

24-Hour Hotline: (800) 4TB – info (4636)

★ **The Fulton County TB clinic is across the street from McDonald's by Grady Hospital**