

Controlling TB in Your Community

All members of the community need to be able to recognize the signs and symptoms of TB.

We all have a role to play in making sure that any person who has symptoms of TB seeks early diagnosis and treatment.

TB doesn't discriminate. People with TB need to be encouraged to complete their treatment, and given care and support.

DOTS stands for "Directly Observed Treatment, Short-course". It means that all TB patients should have a "treatment supporter" - a volunteer who supervises the patient swallowing their drugs every day.

EVERYBODY IN THE COMMUNITY HAS AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN CONTROLLING TB.



TB and HIV/AIDS

TB does not cause HIV/AIDS. However people with HIV/AIDS are more likely to develop TB because their defence systems are weak and damaged.

AIDS patients suffering from TB need TB treatment so they can get better and stop spreading the TB germ.

People with TB or AIDS need our love, care and attention.

A patient who completes the full treatment can expect to regain their health and be able to return to normal activities.

TB is Curable

If someone has these signs or symptoms they should get their sputum checked at a health centre or hospital as soon as possible.

For more information contact the National TB Program Unit (National Department of Health - NDOH) P.O. Box 807, Waigani, NCD



FACTS ABOUT TB



TB is curable - Stop TB

Tuberculosis or TB is a very serious disease that causes many deaths and much sickness in Papua New Guinea every year. But the good news is that TB is CURABLE with proper medicines. By knowing how to recognise TB and when and where to get correct treatment, it is possible to STOP TB.

Cause

TB is an airborne disease, caused by a germ.

Transmission

TB is contagious - it is spread from a sick person to other people by coughing, sneezing or spitting. TB can affect anyone, particularly the poor, very young, and the elderly. Close relatives of the untreated patients are also more at risk.

The TB germ is passed from one person to another on tiny droplets of moisture by:

- Coughing without covering the mouth
- Sneezing without covering the mouth
- Spitting.



TB cannot be spread by:

- Shaking hands or touching a person with TB
- Sharing cups, utensils, bedding and towels
- Toilets seats, food or water.

Signs & Symptoms

The main signs of TB are:

- Cough for 3 weeks which does not improve with treatment (antibiotics)
- Cough with blood
- Loss of appetite, weight loss
- Swelling in the neck or under the arms which don't improve with treatment (antibiotics)

If someone has these signs or symptoms they should get their sputum checked at a health centre or hospital as soon as possible.

Prevention

- Everyone should cover his or her mouth when coughing or sneezing
- Do not spit
- This will help to prevent other sicknesses as well as TB. Ensure good ventilation in the house or workplace
- The TB germ is killed quickly in a well-ventilated room. Direct sunlight will also kill the germs
- Serious forms of TB in children can be prevented by immunisation. All children should be immunised for TB at birth.