

Government

Health and Human Services

Bucks County Health Department

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Tuberculosis Program

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Tuberculosis

Bucks County Department of Health staff provides consultation, testing, referrals and medication to patients. Call: 267-580-3531 for more information, or to schedule an appointment.

Tuberculosis (TB) Facts

T.B. is spread from one person to another through the air. The TB germs are put into the air when someone who has TB disease in their lungs or throat coughs, sneezes, speaks or sings. TB is ***NOT*** spread by sharing food or beverages, shaking someone's hand, touching toilet seats or bed linens or sharing toothbrushes.

How is T.B. Spread?

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Latent TB Infection and TB Disease

There is a difference between being infected with the TB germ and having TB disease. Not everyone who has been infected with the TB germ becomes ill.

Latent TB Infection:

TB germs can live in the body without making you sick. Your body (immune system) can fight the bacteria from growing. People who have been infected with TB germs are **NOT** contagious. They cannot spread these germs to other people.

However, people who have been infected with TB germs can become ill if the TB germs become active. This person will now have TB disease. It is important to note that not everyone infected with TB germs develops TB disease.

TB Disease:

TB disease develops when your immune system can no longer stop the TB germs from multiplying. People who have TB disease feel sick and can now spread TB germs when the infection is in their lungs or throat. Some people can develop disease quickly or it may take years. People who have weakened immune system usually develop the disease more quickly.

TB Disease Symptoms:

Cough that lasts longer than three weeks

Night sweats

Fever/chills

Weight loss

No appetite

Coughing up blood or sputum

Fatigue

Testing for TB Infection

Skin testing (TB test or TST test)

QuantIFERON TB Gold (QGT) blood test

These tests can be administered or ordered by your primary care physician or at the Health Department. If either of these tests are positive your physician or the Health Department will do further testing to determine if you have TB infection or TB Disease.

Exposure to TB

If you believe you may have been exposed to someone who has TB disease contact your primary care physician or the Health Department at: 267-850-3531 or 267-850-3538 to see if you should be tested.

Treatment for TB Infection or TB Disease

The Bucks County Department of Health does provide case management and treatment for both Latent TB Infection and TB Disease.

TB Presentations

To schedule a Tuberculosis educational presentation please contact: Helen O'Meara, RN at: 267-580-3538.

Helpful Resources

- Helen O'Meara, RN, Tuberculosis Program Coordinator, Bucks County Department of Health 267-580-3538.

- CDC. <http://cdc.gov.tb>