



Preventive treatment for tuberculosis infection

Tuberculosis (TB) infection

TB infection occurs when a person breathes in TB bacteria. In most cases, this is because they have had exposure to someone with TB disease (in the lungs). In healthy individuals, the immune (defence) system can control the infection by keeping the bacteria inactive. This is called **latent TB infection (LTBI)**. People with LTBI are not sick and cannot spread TB to others. If left untreated, about 10 percent of people will develop TB disease. This can affect any part of the body but usually affects the lungs. In Australia, active and latent TB can be treated.

People with TB infection:

- Have no symptoms and do not feel sick
- Cannot spread TB to anyone else
- Usually have a positive Tuberculosis Skin Test (TST) or positive QuantiFERON blood test
- Usually have a normal chest x-ray.

Preventive treatment, if taken correctly, can significantly reduce the risk of TB disease.

Information about your treatment

The doctor will talk to you about the risk of developing TB disease and the treatment options available.

If you decide to take preventive treatment, you will be allocated a TB case manager. The course of antibiotic treatment ranges from three to six months.

To prescribe the most appropriate antibiotic, your doctor needs to know what medicines you are taking, your medical history and if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

It is important to understand that once you have started the medication you should continue taking it without interruption. Missed doses will reduce the effectiveness of preventive treatment and increase the risk of future TB disease.

Your medication and possible side effects

Regardless of which antibiotic you choose, we recommend you take the medicine at about the same time every day.

Isoniazid

Each small white tablet contains 100mg of Isoniazid. The daily dose is determined by your weight and the normal adult dose is 300mg daily.

If you experience any of the following symptoms, please contact your TB case manager:

- Stomach upset lasting for more than 48 hours
- Isoniazid can affect your liver. If you feel sick, vomit, have abdominal pain or develop yellow skin/eyes, contact your doctor or case manager immediately
- Itchiness of the skin at the beginning of treatment
- Minor symptoms such as irritability, fatigue, lack of concentration and worsening of acne
- Tingling of the fingers and toes (peripheral neuropathy) can occasionally occur - your doctor may prescribe vitamin B6 to prevent this
- Tell your doctor or TB case manager if you are taking medication for epilepsy as drug interactions may occur.



Rifampicin

Capsules come in two strengths, 150mg or 300mg. The colours vary according to brand/strength. Your dose is determined by your weight. Adult doses can be 450mg to 600mg once daily.

We recommend you take them on an empty stomach, an hour before or two hours after food.

If you experience any of the following symptoms, please contact your TB case manager:

- Stomach upset, nausea, loss of appetite and abdominal discomfort
- Mild flushing, itchy skin or a faint rash (can come and go throughout treatment)
- Dark concentrated urine.

Rifampicin may also cause:

- A change in the colour of your urine, sweat, tears and saliva to orange-reddish. This side effect is harmless, although soft contact lenses may become discoloured
- Reduced effectiveness of the contraceptive pill (a second form of contraception may be indicated and should be discussed with your GP)
- Drug interactions - tell your doctor if you are taking warfarin, oral diabetic drugs, digoxin, phenobarbitone, methadone, morphine or dapsone

Precautions

Please advise your TB doctor if you are taking any other medications, including over the counter medication or if your medications change.

We recommend showing your GP or family doctor your medication if you need other treatment or are going into hospital.

Alcohol should be avoided during the duration of treatment.

Keep all medication out of reach of children in a cool, dry place.

Regular medical visits

While you are taking preventive treatment, regular visits to the TB clinic are required to:

- Check your weight and general health
- Check for any side effects from the medicines
- Check you are taking the medicines correctly
- Collect a further supply of medicines.

This treatment will be provided to you free of charge by the WA Tuberculosis Control Program.



WA Tuberculosis Control Program

📍 Anita Clayton Centre,
1/311 Wellington Street, Perth WA 6000

☎ (+61) 08 9222 8500

✉ ACCadmin@health.wa.gov.au



We are proud to be a smoke-free site.
Thank you for not smoking or vaping.

This document can be made available
in alternative formats on request.