



# Tuberculosis medication

You are about to start a course of treatment for tuberculosis disease (TB). You will need to take the medicine for at least six months or as recommended by your doctor.

TB can be cured in almost all cases by taking your medication without interruption.

You will be allocated a TB case manager (nurse) from the TB Clinic who will help monitor your treatment.

**You must take all the medicine each day and inform your TB case manager as soon as possible if you miss any.**

## General information

Inform your doctor about any medication you are taking and your past medical history.

Do **not** stop taking your medication even when you feel better. **Failure to take your medicine as prescribed can lead to bacterial resistance and/or treatment failure.**

Avoid alcohol during the period of your treatment.

You will need to attend regular medical appointments while you are taking the medication to monitor your progress and check if the medicine is working and if you have any side effects.

Let your doctor or case manager know if:

- You develop any side effects or are worried
- You cannot attend your appointment so your appointment can be rescheduled
- You start taking other medication
- Your regular medication changes
- There are any changes to your medical history.

**All medication for TB treatment is supplied free of charge from the TB clinic.**

## Medication commonly used to treat TB

### 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

## Pyrazinamide

Each large white tablet contains 500mg and the dose is determined by your weight.

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

- Stomach upset, nausea, loss of appetite and abdominal discomfort
- Mild pain in the muscles or joints (this is usually managed using ibuprofen or paracetamol)
- Skin reactions - itchiness
- If you feel sick, vomit, have abdominal pain or develop yellow skin/eyes, contact your doctor or case manager immediately
- Rashes and photosensitivity (sunburn) can occur, so we recommend you avoid unnecessary or prolonged exposure to sunlight and wear protective clothing, sunglasses and sunscreen.

## Ethambutol

Each tablet contains 400mg. Your dose is determined by your weight.

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

- Stomach upset, nausea, loss of appetite and abdominal discomfort
- Pain in the joints
- Itchiness and rashes.

**Any change to your vision should be reported to your TB case manager immediately.** Your doctor will check your vision at the start and throughout your TB treatment.

## Side effects

If side effects occur it is important to report them to your TB case manager or doctor **immediately**.

## Regular medical visits

While you are taking TB 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.

## 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.

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



### WA Tuberculosis Control Program

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

☎ (+61) 08 9222 8500

✉ ACCadmin@health.wa.gov.au

© North Metropolitan Health Service 2023



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.