



For Staff Education

Tuberculosis

What is it?

- Tuberculosis (TB) is a respiratory disease caused by the bacteria *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*
- There are two types of respiratory TB: active disease and latent TB infection (LTBI)
- Symptoms of active TB disease are cough, fatigue, fever, night sweats, weight loss and chest pain

How is it spread?

- It is spread by the airborne route from the respiratory tract of an individual with active TB disease
- TB is not a highly infectious disease and usually requires close, frequent and prolonged exposure to a source case
- Occasionally, TB may be spread from a non-respiratory TB case when infected fluid becomes aerosolized during a procedure (e.g., body fluid from a draining abscess during dressing changes)

Where is it found?

- In the respiratory tract and isolated from sputum
- Worldwide, especially in developing countries

Prevention and control

- Use airborne precautions (in addition to routine practices) when caring for someone with active TB disease
- Place someone with active TB disease in a private room with negative pressure
- Keep windows and doors closed at all times
- Wear an approved, fit-tested, particulate respirator (mask), e.g., N95 when entering room
- Postpone elective procedures until the client/patient/resident is non-infectious
- Place a surgical mask on TB clients/patients/residents if they must leave the room
- Inform the receiving department and staff involved in transport about the infection control precautions in use
- Require that visitors wear an N95 respirator when entering room
- Discourage visits by children (due to their increased susceptibility)
- Notify infection prevention and control personnel

Adapted from: <https://lung.healthdiary.ca/Guest/Product.aspx?IDS=yaQAZ%2f8w5Dph%2fsSJ8eILtw%3d%3d>