

Information about latent tuberculosis

Tuberculosis is a bacterial infection mostly affecting the lungs, but other part of the body can also be affected.

When a person sick with pulmonary tuberculosis coughs, the germs might spread in the air and other people can inhale them. Not everyone that has been exposed to the germ will be infected, and most of those who have been infected will **not** become sick with tuberculosis.

Latent tuberculosis means that the germs have entered the body, but are not active. A person with latent tuberculosis

- is healthy
- cannot infect other people

Nine out of ten persons with latent tuberculosis will never develop an active disease. The risk of the infection being activated is increased

- the first two years after infection
- among small children
- after pregnancy
- if you have another disease or take medication that weakens the immune system

In some situations it can be indicated to eradicate the bacteria from the body which means taking medication for many months.

Symptoms of active tuberculosis could be

- cough lasting for weeks
- unexplained weight loss
- night sweats
- swollen glands
- unexplained fever

If you get any of these symptoms you should contact your doctor for further medical investigation.

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2013-02-22*