

## How can I get more information about TB?

If you want more information you can contact the following:

### Your doctor or nurse

(Free translated information and interpreting services available)

### Public Health England-Latent TB Testing and Treatment

<https://www.gov.uk/tuberculosis-screening#latent-tb-infection-ltbi>

### The Truth About TB website

<http://www.thetruthabouttb.org/what-is-tb/latent-tb/>

### NHS Choices

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/tuberculosis/pages/introduction.aspx>

Public Health England  
133-155 Waterloo Road  
Wellington House  
London SE1 8UG  
Tel: 020 7654 8000  
[www.gov.uk/phe](http://www.gov.uk/phe)  
Twitter: @PHE\_uk  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland](http://www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland)



## Latent TB testing and treatment: Information for patients

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## Why have I been offered a latent tuberculosis (TB) test?

You have been recommended a free latent TB test because you have arrived in the UK from a country where TB is common. It will involve a quick blood test and a few simple questions.

## What is tuberculosis?

TB is an illness caused by airborne bacteria (germs). TB bacteria can sleep in your body, often for many years, without making you ill. This is called latent TB.

Sometimes the latent TB bacteria can 'wake-up' and make you ill. This is called active TB, and when you hear people talk about TB this is usually what they mean. It is important to know the symptoms of active TB – cough, fever, loss of appetite, night sweats, weight loss and tiredness – and to go to a doctor if you experience any of these symptoms because you could have active TB.

## Why should I be tested for latent TB?

If you have latent TB bacteria in your body, there is about a one in ten chance the bacteria will wake up and make you ill sometime in the future. Although active TB can usually be cured, it is much better not to get sick at all.

Fortunately, latent TB can also be treated. This will protect your own health by preventing you from getting ill, and from the risk of passing on TB bacteria to your family and friends.

## Why am I at risk of TB?

You are more at risk if you lived in a country where TB is very common. You might have caught latent TB before you came to the UK.

## What happens if my blood test is positive?

If your blood test shows that you have latent TB, your doctor or nurse will offer you antibiotic treatment. The treatment will last three or six months. Your doctor will explain about your care and why it is important to finish your treatment. As with all medications, there is a small risk of side effects which your doctor or nurse can help you manage.

## What should I do next?

Please ensure you see your GP for latent TB testing. If you have any questions at all please ask at your GP surgery.



## Will my results be shared?

Information from your test can tell us how well we are reaching people at risk of latent TB. This will help to protect your community. Your data will be shared with the national latent TB programme run by Public Health England (PHE) and the information is used to help:

1. understand any links between your background and risk of latent TB;
2. show that latent TB testing and treatment prevents active TB, by matching your record to the national active TB notification database;
3. link the outcome of your test with the outcome of any treatment you may need;
4. ensure you are only tested for latent TB once.

If you do not consent to sharing personal information you can opt out of this and then, only relevant background and medical outcomes that cannot identify you will be shared. Further detail on this is found at [www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/tsd/ig/ig-fair-process/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/tsd/ig/ig-fair-process/). If you do not want any information to be shared at all, or require further detail and do not have internet access, please write to:

Head of Public Accountability,  
Public Health England,  
Wellington House,  
133-155 Waterloo Road,  
London  
SE1 8UG