# Tuberculosis

**What you should know**

- **Tuberculosis (TB) is a bacterial infection.**
  - Most people with TB have it in their lungs. But it can infect any part of the body.
  - Antibiotics can cure TB.

- **TB has 2 stages.**
  - **A person with latent TB infection:**
    - Has TB bacteria but isn't sick.
    - Can't spread TB.
    - Should get treatment before developing active TB disease.
  - **A person with active TB disease:**
    - Has TB bacteria and is sick.
    - Can spread TB through a cough, sneeze, laugh, shout or singing.
    - Must get treatment to avoid getting very sick and dying.

- **TB isn’t easily spread.**
  - You have to spend a lot of time close to a person with active TB disease to catch it.
  - TB isn't easily spread outdoors because air flows freely and sunlight kills the bacteria.

- **TB isn’t spread when people:**
  - Share clothes.
  - Share utensils.
  - Hug, kiss or have sex.

- **TB is uncommon in the U.S.**
  - About 20 TB cases occur in Pierce County each year.

**Active TB disease symptoms:**

- Coughing 3 weeks or more.
- Fever.
- Fatigue.
- Night sweats.
- Weight loss.
- Coughing up blood.

**People at highest risk for TB:**

- Live with a person with active TB disease.
- Travel to or were born where TB is common.
- Have a health problem.

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To learn more, visit tpchd.org/tb.