

# Could you be at-risk for tuberculosis?

Canada has one of the lowest rates of active tuberculosis (TB) disease worldwide, but new TB cases are still reported in Canada every year. While the majority of Canadians will not come into contact with TB, other Canadians have a higher risk of becoming infected.

People who were born in or lived in foreign countries with high TB infection rates and Indigenous peoples are most at risk for TB infection in Canada.

People who may be at higher risk for TB need to understand more about this infectious disease so that they can discuss TB with their healthcare provider during their next health checkup.

Active TB disease is caused by bacteria that are spread through the air from person to person. TB bacteria get into the air when someone with active TB disease coughs or sneezes, or even sings or talks.

TB is a serious disease that attacks the lungs and sometimes spreads to other parts of the body. Symptoms include coughing for more than two weeks, coughing up blood, weight loss, fatigue, fever, night sweats, and chills.

You can be infected with TB without

knowing it. This type of TB is called latent TB infection and means you are infected, but you will not have any symptoms and you cannot pass on the bacteria to others. Although you may not have symptoms of TB, you should still seek testing and possible treatment to stop the infection from becoming active, especially if you have a higher risk of getting TB.

The good news is that TB is preventable and curable with antibiotics. Testing and treatment are highly effective and may be provided by a healthcare provider in your own community. For example, a skin test can be performed to determine if you have latent TB infection.

If you have been in contact with someone who has active TB disease or think you may have, consult your healthcare provider. If you have a job where you could be exposed to TB, your workplace may have a TB management program or an occupational health program.

The only way to help reduce the spread of TB worldwide is to prevent spreading the infection to others. If you are at higher risk for TB, see your healthcare provider and get tested.

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