

# Tuberculosis

## What is Tuberculosis

Tuberculosis (TB) is a bacterial infection spread through inhaling tiny droplets from the coughs or sneezes of an infected person. TB mainly affects the lungs, however it can affect any part of the body, including the glands, bones and nervous system.

## Typical symptoms of TB include:

- A persistent cough that lasts more than three weeks
- Night sweats
- High temperature (fever)
- Tiredness and fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- New swellings that haven't gone away after a few weeks

## Risk Factors for TB

- Contact with a person who has had infectious TB.
- People who have lived or worked in a country with high TB risk.
- People whose immune system is affected by illness or immunosuppressive drug therapy

## Management of TB cases.

All patients diagnosed with TB will have a named TB nurse who is based on the community. The role of the TB nurse is to monitor compliance with treatment, observe for side effects and ensure effective contact tracing to identify secondary cases of active TB and contacts with latent TB. TB patients will be required to take Standard TB treatment for a 6 month period. 4 drugs for the first 2 months and then 2 drugs for the remaining 4 months. Compliance with treatment is very important to ensure that TB is successfully treated and prevention the development of secondary drug resistance.

## Infection Control Precautions

Patients in care homes who have infectious TB will need isolation for the first 2 weeks of treatment. The TB nurse will advise you if any precautions other than Standard Infection Control Precautions are required.

**Please contact the TB Nursing team for advice on 01744 457 314**