

For patients having a Tuberculosis Examination



Tokyo Metropolitan Government
Bureau of Social Welfare and Public Health

英語

What is Tuberculosis?

Tuberculosis (TB) is a disease caused when tuberculosis bacteria enter the body. When anyone with TB coughs or sneezes, the bacteria are dispersed into the air. Anyone breathing in these airborne bacteria may be infected.

In the early stages of TB, the symptoms are coughing, phlegm, and fever and similar to the common cold. Therefore, it may take some time before a diagnosis of TB can be made. If your cough lasts for more than two weeks, visit a medical institution such as a hospital, clinic, etc. It does take time to treat TB once it develops, however, it is no longer an “incurable disease.” If you are a family member or a friend of the patient, support him/her because patients often feel vulnerable.



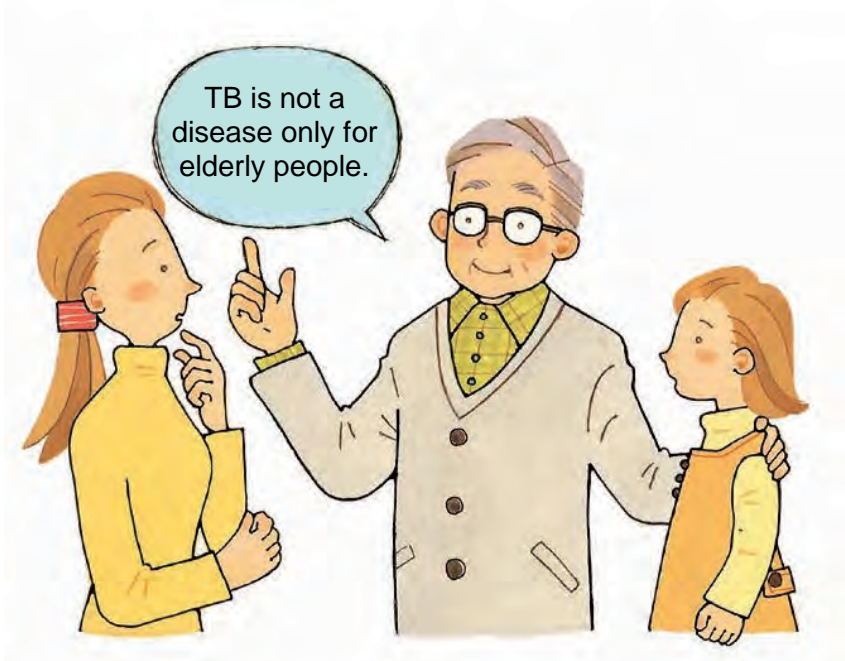
■ Table of Contents

1	Tuberculosis is not a “Disease of the Past”	3
2	Infected with Tuberculosis is Different from Onset	4
3	Why is an Exposed Person Examination Necessary? ...	5
4	What Tests are Conducted in an Exposed Person Examination?	6
5	What is Latent Tuberculosis Infection?	7
6	What is a Chest X-Ray Examination?	8
7	To Cure Tuberculosis	9
8	Care offered to Patients	10
9	Roles of HOKENJO (Public Health Center)	11
10	Health Examination Records	12
	List of HOKENJO (Public Health Center)	13
	Checkup Card.....	14
	Notes	16

1

Tuberculosis is not a “Disease of the Past”

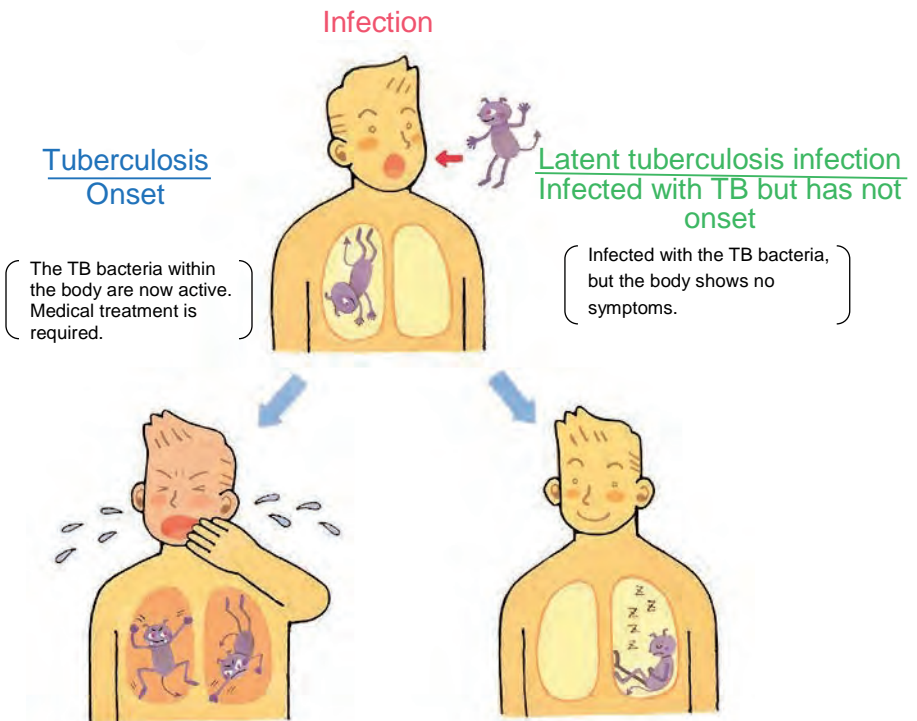
Even today, annually about 18,000 people develop TB nationwide and in Tokyo about 2,300 people (in 2015). Especially in recent years, the ratio of elderly patients is increasing, however, in Tokyo, the ratio of patients in their 20s and 30s is higher than other prefectures. So even young people need to be aware of the disease.



2

Infected with Tuberculosis is Different from Onset

In many cases, the body is resistant and defeats the TB bacteria when they enter. However, in some cases, the resistance fails and the bacteria stay inside the body, and this condition is referred to as “infected.” When TB bacteria activate inside the body, a lesion forms and such symptoms as cough, phlegm, or fever will appear. However, not every person who is infected will experience active TB. Only 1 or 2 people out of every 10 infected will develop TB.



3

Why is an Exposed Person Examination Necessary?

To find people with active TB or who are infected with TB at an early stage, the family and persons in close contact are given an Exposed Person Examination.

For any exposed person there is a greater chance of infection if the patient has a high TB bacteria count in their phlegm, or if a person is in close contact with the patient, such as when talking to them.

HOKENJO (Public Health Center) draws up types of tests and carries out the Exposed Person Examination based on the amount of TB bacteria in the patient's phlegm, the age of the surrounding persons, and the contact situation.

The examination includes: IGRA exam (QFT and T-SPOT exams); chest X-ray examination; tuberculin skin test, and others.



4

What Tests are Conducted in an Exposed Person Examination?

In the Exposed Person Examination, the types of tests and date will be decided and carried out based on the patient's disease condition, and the age and health condition of the people being examined, and the characteristics of each test.

1) IGRA examination

A blood sample is taken and examined for tuberculosis infection.

If your immune system is weak, the test results may not be clear. Even though a person has been infected, for a period of eight weeks after infection, the test results will not show positive.

2) Tuberculin skin test

Tuberculin is injected and after 48 hours reddening of the skin measured.

The test checks for the presence of a TB infection.

This test is conducted generally on preschoolers under six years of age.

The reaction may be bigger if the child has received a BCG vaccination.

For a period of eight weeks after infection, the test results will not show positive.

For infants and others, who have not received a BCG vaccination and there is a consequent risk of a severe case of TB developing, LTBI treatment may be started (see the next page) despite a negative test result.

3) Chest X-ray examination

This is a chest x-ray examination to check for the onset of tuberculosis.

Those who do not have the IGRA examination will first take this examination.

5

What is Latent Tuberculosis Infection?

Latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI) refers to a state where an individual is infected with TB bacteria without any TB symptoms, but with a possibility of developing TB. To prevent the onset of TB, take Isoniazid (INH) generally for a minimum of six months.

This treatment is subject to the medical expenses public funding policy.

There are no special lifestyle limitations during the treatment.

However, the onset of TB is often triggered when immunity is low caused by overwork and stress, diabetes, etc.

In addition, if you do not regularly take medication to suppress the onset of TB, or stop taking it, the onset cannot be prevented and may cause a risk of creating a drug-resistant TB bacteria.

If you are infected with a drug-resistant TB bacteria, medication will be changed as needed. Take medication consistently until the end of the course.



6

What is a Chest X-Ray Examination?

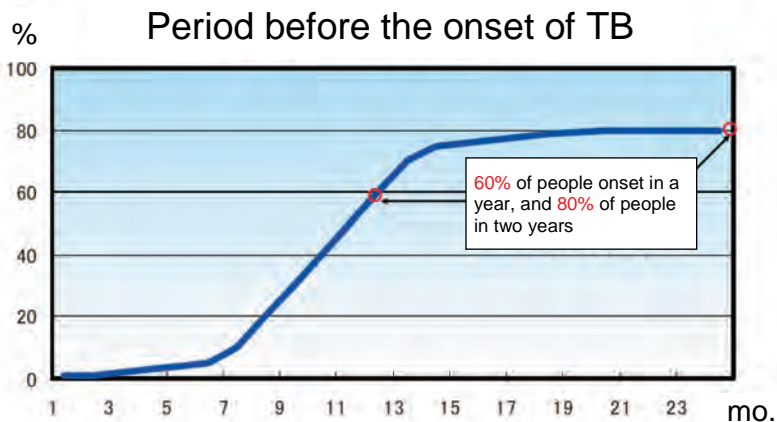
A chest X-ray examination is a test to determine the onset of TB. If TB has developed, the result shows the condition of the lungs, including how much lesions have spread.

For many cases, onset can take from six months to two years from tuberculosis infection.

During the period, HOKENJO (Public Health Center) will schedule chest x-ray examinations as needed.

Attend every scheduled health examination. If you cannot attend, or your workplace, school, or location changes due to relocation etc., contact your jurisdiction HOKENJO (Public Health Center).

Caution: if any cough, phlegm, or fever persist for more than two weeks, visit a medical institution instead of waiting for your scheduled health examination.



When you are infected with TB, in most cases it develops between six months to a year after infection, and about 80% will develop TB within two years.

7

To Cure Tuberculosis

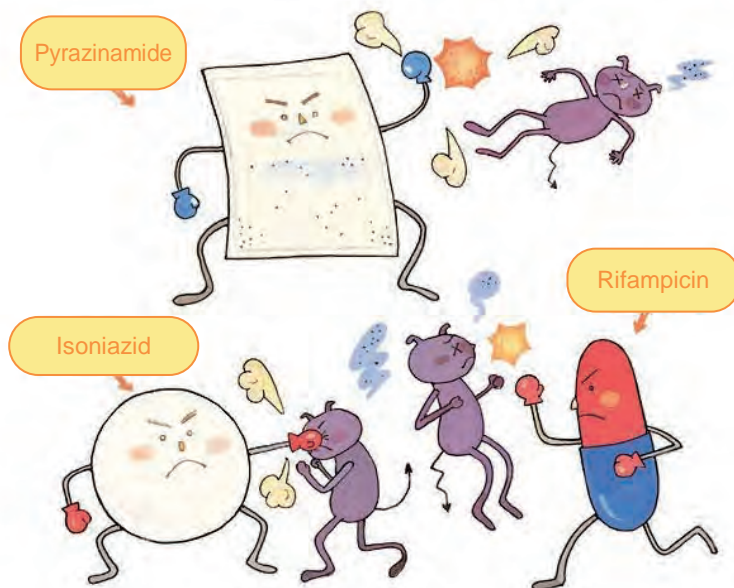
In order to cure TB, multiple drugs are combined according to the patient's condition. It is very important to diligently take regular medication for the necessary period which will be more than six months.

Most patient's condition will improve and the risk of infecting others will be reduced in two to four weeks after commencing treatment if they continue taking medication. However, stopping medication or taking it irregularly, may worsen the condition, and develop a drug-resistant bacteria rendering the medication ineffective.

For a severe condition, medication treatment may last more than one year or an operation may even be required.

Continuing medication over a long term without forgetting is difficult for everyone.

HOKENJO (Public Health Center) also offers support to ensure you take your medication regularly. Let's complete the treatment together!



8

Care Offered to Patients

An individual with latent tuberculosis infection shows no symptoms of TB and is not infectious to other people.

Even for someone who has developed active TB, the degree of infectiousness will be reduced within two weeks by taking regular medication.

When the patient returns to school or work, there is no risk of infecting others.

Offer care to the patient.

Many people suffer from social prejudice due to their health conditions, such as tuberculosis, AIDS, Hansen's disease, etc. Their human dignity is not changed by the disease. We must support them, so they can focus on their treatment.





Roles of HOKENJO (Public Health Center)

HOKENJO (Public Health Center) supporting healthy, vibrant lives! PHC assists TB patients with medication, medical consultations, post-treatment health checkups, and conducts checkups on a patient's family and friends.

* Please note, public funding partially covers medical expenses for TB treatment, and you can submit an application to HOKENJO (Public Health Center).

If you have any concerns, contact your PHC.

What is DOTS?

DOTS is an acronym meaning "Directly Observed Treatment, Short-Course" and a strategy recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO). DOTS has five components:

- 1) Government commitment
- 2) Diagnosis by sputum-smear microscopy and follow-up observation
- 3) Medication given under direct and supportive observation
- 4) A regular, uninterrupted supply of drugs
- 5) Recording and reporting of examination results

This strategy was incorporated into Japanese law in 2005, and in particular, medication is given to patients under direct and supportive observation to help them with their continuous medication in-take at hospitals and HOKENJO (Public Health Center).



Health Examination Records

1 Checkup schedule (test result)

Scheduled date		Test	Result			Conducted Institution	Remarks	
Immediate	Y M D	Chest X-Ray Exam						
		IGRA Exam						
		Tuberculin Skin Test	Injection Site (Left Right Upper Middle Lower)	X	(Blister / Necrosis and Hemorrhage)			
				X				
Other Test								
2 Mo. Later	Y M D	Chest X-Ray Exam						
		IGRA Exam						
		Tuberculin Skin Test	Injection Site (Left Right Upper Middle Lower)	X	(Blister / Necrosis and Hemorrhage)			
				X				
Other Test								
6 Mo. Later	Y M D	Chest X-Ray Exam						
1 Yr. Later	Y M D	Chest X-Ray Exam						
2 Yr. Later	Y M D	Chest X-Ray Exam						

2 For those undergoing checkups

- (1) Taking only one checkup is not enough. You must attend all the scheduled checkups.
- (2) If you have a cough, phlegm, chest pain, or slight fever for more than two weeks, do not wait for your next checkup. Visit a medical institution with this form. This also applies even after the treatment is over.

3 For doctors at medical institutions

Mr./Ms. _____ might have been infected with the TB bacteria around Y M D _____, and this patient has been examined according to the schedule above. If there are any signs of tuberculosis, please contact us at the following HOKENJO (Public Health Center).

HOKENJO (Public Health Center): _____ **Dept.:** _____

Tel No.: _____ () _____