

# What is Tuberculosis?

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Tuberculosis is a disease that usually affects the lungs. TB is caused by bacteria called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. The bacteria, or germs, usually attack the lungs. TB germs can attack any part of the body, such as the kidney, spine, or brain.

## How is TB spread?

TB germs are spread from person to person through the air. TB germs are put into the air when a person with TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs, sneezes, laughs, or sings. People nearby may breathe in the TB germs and become infected. TB is NOT spread by sharing silverware or cups or sharing saliva when kissing someone.

## How can I prevent the spread of TB?

To avoid the spread of TB, avoid close or prolonged contact with people who have tested positive for TB. If you have latent TB, discuss medication options with your primary care provider to prevent the development of TB disease.

## How can I tell if I have TB?

If you may have been exposed to TB, please contact the St. Paul Community Health Center to get a TB skin test or TB blood test. If you have a positive result to either of the tests, you may be given other tests to see if you have latent TB infection or TB disease.

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More information about TB can be found by visiting CDC Division of Tuberculosis Elimination website at [www.cdc.gov/tb](http://www.cdc.gov/tb). Contact St. Paul Health Center if you think you've been exposed to TB or if you have any symptoms.

