

# What is tuberculosis (TB)?

Information for the community about TB

Tuberculosis (TB) is a sickness that is very common around the world, even though we do not see it much in Australia anymore. The good news is it can be treated so that people fully recover.

## About TB

TB is a bacteria (germ) that can infect your body, especially your lungs.

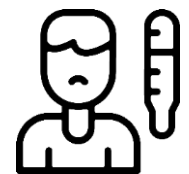
It can be passed between people, although it does not spread as quickly and easily as a virus like COVID or the flu.



## Symptoms

People who have TB can have:

- > A cough lasting for weeks
- > Blood when they cough
- > Lumps or swelling in their neck
- > Fever, chills and sweats
- > Rapid weight loss



## 'Latent' or 'sleeping' TB

Some people have the TB germ in their body, but it is 'sleeping'. Sleeping TB does not make you sick and you might not even know it is there.

'Latent' or 'sleeping' TB can wake up and make you sick, so it is important to treat it if it is there.

## What to do

See your local clinic for a test if you have any symptoms of TB.

They can do a test and, if you have TB, give you medicines and treatment.

A health worker may also ask to test you for 'latent' TB if you are in an area where other people have TB, just to be safe.

## For more information:

Royal Adelaide Hospital, SA TB Services  
Telephone: (08) 7074 1089 (business hours)  
[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au)

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