



## What happens after I finish my treatment?

After taking your medication exactly as directed for six months, you'll be asked to take a chest X-ray a total of four times in the future: six months, one year, one and a half years and two years after you completed your treatment. This is to check to see whether you have active TB. Visit your doctor immediately if you experience symptoms such as coughs, sputum, chest pain or fever.

**If you find yourself experiencing sputum, coughs, chest pain or fever that doesn't go away during or after your latent TB treatment, make sure to tell your doctor about your condition in detail and get a chest X-ray.**

Feel free to consult your local public health department about any questions or concerns you might have about TB care, recovery and medications.

**Assigned Public Health Officer:**

---

# Learning about Latent Tuberculosis Treatment

## Q & A

# Make Sure You Treat Tuberculosis While It's Still Inactive!

After taking a tuberculin skin test and a QuantiFERON® (QFT) test to find out whether you have tuberculosis...

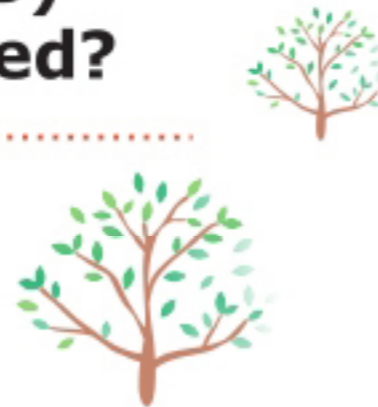
...these are the results for ( )

	Tuberculin skin test	QFT test	Chest X-ray
Date	/ /	/ /	/ /
Result			Normal

The above results show that you need to undergo treatment for latent tuberculosis.

## Q1 What is latent tuberculosis (TB) and why do I need to be treated?

Latent TB is when you have been infected with TB bacteria but aren't showing any major symptoms. Since you have TB in its inactive form, you need to take medication to reduce the risk that your infection will develop into the full-blown disease.



## Q2 How do you know if I'm infected?

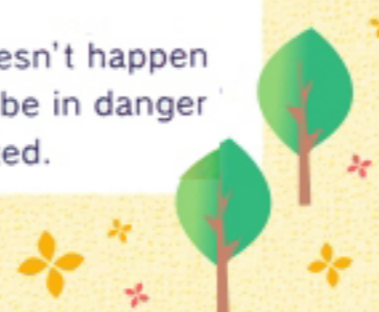
We give you two types of tests - a tuberculin skin test and a QFT test - to find out if the type of bacterium that causes TB is in your body. If the test results are positive, then you've been infected.



## Q3 What's the difference between latent and active TB?

If your immune system is relatively strong, it has the ability to keep TB bacteria from becoming active for some time after it enters your body. This doesn't mean your immune system has killed the bacteria. On the contrary, the bacteria are just asleep, so to speak. When your immune system weakens, the bacteria seize this chance to awaken from this sleep and start causing trouble. Under these circumstances, you now have active TB.

In many cases, latent TB turns into active TB within two years of infection. If this doesn't happen within two years, then the risk of activation falls to a certain extent, but you will still be in danger of developing the full-blown disease for the rest of your life if you aren't properly treated.



## Q4 What kinds of drugs will I take for latent TB?

You take medicines like Isoniazid (INH) and Rifampicin (RFP) to kill the bacteria in your body that causes tuberculosis. The medication duration is 6 months if you are taking only INH, and 3 to 4 months if you are taking both INH and RFP. If you cannot use INH because of an adverse effect, you can take RFP for 4 months. Although the medicines and their duration periods are different, the preventive effect is the same. It is important to regularly take your medicine once a day.



## Q5 How long will latent TB treatment be effective?

If you take your medication every day exactly as directed for six months, you can cut the risk of developing active TB by about 70% compared to not undergoing treatment. According to medical studies, this reduced risk lasts more than 10 years. If you don't take your medication exactly as directed and tend to miss doses, the treatment won't work and your risk of developing active TB will rise considerably.



## Q6 Do I need to change anything in my lifestyle during treatment?

Your treatment won't affect your daily life in any way. You won't have to change anything about going to work or school, and you can go on with your life as you always have.



## Q7 What about side effects?

For many years, Isoniazid (INH) and Rifampicin (RFP) have been used to prevent and cure tuberculosis all over the world, and they have shown little adverse effect. Despite this, some adverse effects may rarely occur. These include a deterioration in liver function, numbness in the fingertips, loss of appetite, and eczema. If you exhibit such symptoms, consult your medical doctor.

## Q8 How much does this treatment cost?

You can lower your out-of-pocket treatment costs by applying for financial aid through the Public Program to Subsidize Medical Care for Tuberculosis. You will need to ask your doctor to fill out a proper financial aid application form. You will then take this form along with your chest X-ray images to your local public health department.