

Home Isolation for Tuberculosis (TB)

If you have TB disease in the lungs or throat, you can spread your TB through the air to other people when you cough, sneeze, talk, laugh or sing. It is important for you to stay at home in isolation. This will stop the spread of TB and protect your family and friends. You will be in isolation precautions for a minimum of two weeks depending on how sick you are. You will need to stay at home in isolation until your Public Health Nurse tells you that you can no longer spread the disease to other people.

Protect your Family and Other People

- Young people and people with weak immune systems can get TB more easily.
- Your Public Health Nurse will talk to you about testing your family members or roommate and those you have had close contact with so they can be tested.
- Open your windows to let out the TB germs.
- When you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve, then dispose of the tissue and wash your hands.
- Do not invite visitors into your home or visit others.
- Do not go to public places (work, school, libraries, and places of worship, banks, community centres, restaurants, coffee shops, movie theatres, grocery stores or shopping malls).
- Do not ride on public transportation (buses, subways, trains, airplanes and boats).

Length of Time for Home Isolation

The length of time for home isolation is different for each person. This depends on your TB test results and on how well you are tolerating your TB medications. It is important to take all your TB medications as instructed. This will kill the germs and cure your TB.

Tips for Home Isolation

- You, your family members and roommates do not need to wear a mask in your own home. The TB bacteria have already spread throughout your home.
- You can go for short walks outside. When you are outside, you do not need to wear a mask, but stay away from other people.
- You can go to medical appointments for your TB or if you have a medical emergency, but you must wear a mask and immediately tell the receptionist about your TB. All other non-urgent appointments must be rescheduled until you are no longer on isolation.

Reference: Adapted with the Permission of Toronto Public Health.