

Testing for tuberculosis (TB)

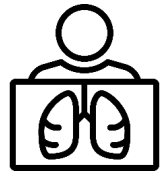
Information for the community

If you have symptoms of tuberculosis (TB) – like an ongoing or bloody cough, a fever, night sweats, lumps in your neck, or you're losing weight – you should see a health worker and get a test for TB.

Types of tests

There are many ways we can test for TB. The main tests include:

- > a skin test
- > a blood test
- > a sputum (phlegm) test
- > a chest x-ray.



Your health worker might refer you to a specialist to do more than one type of test.

Sometimes, a skin or blood test can show you have been exposed to TB, but it doesn't mean the germ is making you sick. It could be a latent (or 'sleeping') infection.

Checking for 'latent' or 'sleeping' TB

We often use a skin test and/or a blood test to check for 'latent' or 'sleeping' TB. This is when you have TB in your body but it is not making you sick, and you do not even know the germ is there.

Sleeping TB can be treated so you don't get sick later, as it can 'wake up' and cause disease.

If there are people with TB in your area, a health worker may ask you or your family to do a skin test or blood test, just to be safe.

What if my Doctor says I have TB?

If your Doctor reviews your test and says you have TB, there is no need to worry – it can be treated so you recover.

If someone you live with has a test that says they have been infected with TB, don't be afraid of them – the germ moves slowly, but it is still a good idea to visit your local clinic so you can get checked too.

Support your friends and family to get tested and treated for TB so that we can get rid of it completely. We can cure TB and help make your community healthier.

For more information:

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

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