

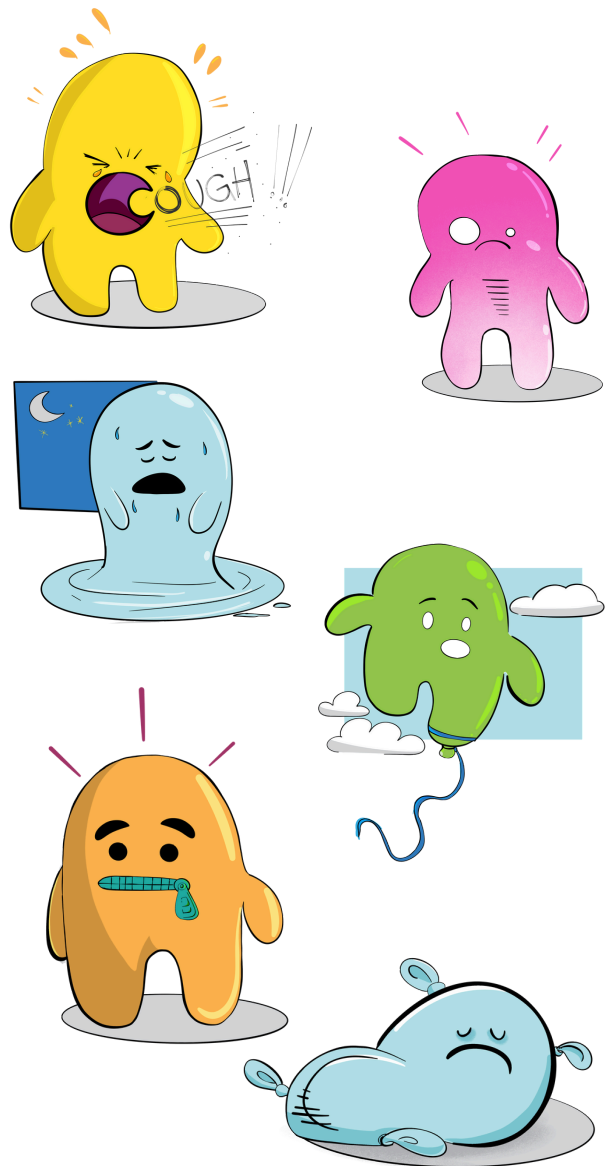
A young person's guide to TB

What is TB?

TB is a germ that can make people sick. It's carried in the air, so anyone can breathe it in.

If you breathe in the TB germ, one of three things can happen:

- **Your body wins!** Your immune system kills the germs right away so you don't get sick.
- **You get sick.** This is called 'TB disease' or 'active TB'. When this happens, you might feel unwell and could pass the germs to others if the TB is in your lungs or throat.
- **The germs live quietly inside you.** This is called 'TB infection' or 'latent TB'. Your body keeps the germs under control, so you won't feel sick and you can't spread it to others. However, the germs could "get active" and make you sick later on, especially if you get run down.



TB disease symptoms

Common symptoms of TB disease can include a cough, fever, night sweats, weight loss, loss of appetite and tiredness. It can also cause pain and swelling. These symptoms can seem like other illnesses, so talk to a doctor if you feel unwell for three weeks or more.

Common symptoms

- cough
- fever
- night sweats
- weight loss
- loss of appetite
- tiredness

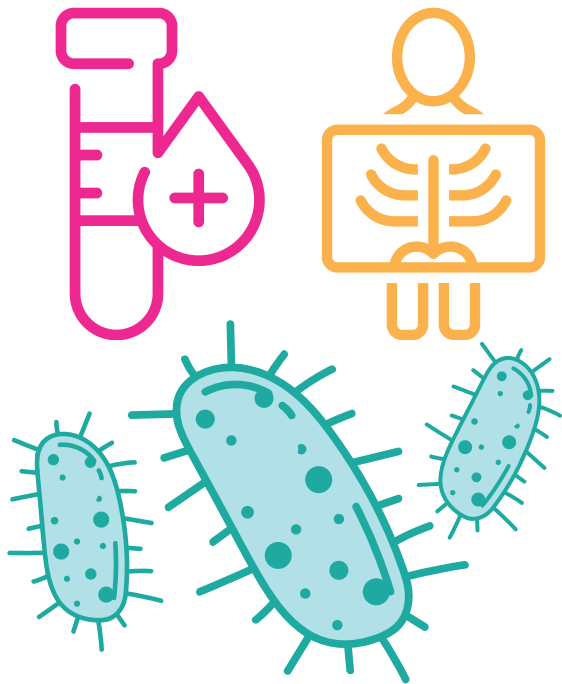
How do doctors find TB?

If a doctor thinks you might have TB, they might do some simple tests:

Skin or blood test: To see if you've ever been around TB germs.

Chest X-ray: To check for signs of TB in your lungs.

If these tests show something, they may do more tests to look for TB germs in your body or any damage they may cause.



Getting help

It's okay to feel worried or have questions about TB. You can always talk to your doctor or nurse.

There are also people you can talk to who have had TB before, so they know what you're going through. You can find help and support online on the TB Alert forum healthunlocked.com/tb-alert or by emailing the TB Action community: contact@tbalert.org

How do you get better?

The good news is that TB can be cured with special medicines called antibiotics.



- If you have TB disease, you'll need to take a course of antibiotics for at least six months.
- If you have TB infection, the treatment is usually shorter and uses fewer antibiotics.

It's super important to take all your medicine exactly as the doctor tells you to, even if you start feeling better. If you stop taking your medicine too early, you could get sicker or the TB could become drug-resistant, which makes it much harder to treat.

