



Tuberculosis (TB) medicines

This information sheet explains about the medicines used to treat and prevent tuberculosis (TB) and gives some important hints about making sure they are effective.

How is TB treated?

TB disease is treated using a combination of medicines, which must be taken for six to nine months or sometimes longer if the TB is in a part of the body which is difficult to treat or if the TB is in a hard to treat form (resistant). A combination is needed to prevent the bacteria becoming resistant to one or more medicines.

It is really important that your child takes the medicines as the doctor and TB nurse tell you. The medicines will only treat TB if the complete course is taken. The treatment must not be stopped without advice from your doctor, as the TB disease will return and may become resistant to certain medicines, making treatment more difficult. Also if the TB medicines are not being taken properly and the TB disease is not being fully treated, this could pose a risk to other children/YP in the hospital when you are coming for an appointment. While your child is being treated at home, there is no need for any special precautions.

Some TB medicines may affect pregnancy or the unborn baby, so we may ask your daughter (if she is 12 years old or older) about her periods and whether there is any chance that she could be pregnant.

Preventing TB after close contact

If your child has been in contact with TB, there may be germs in the body, but they have not caused active disease. This is described as latent TB. Your child will not be showing any symptoms at the moment and they are not infectious to others. However, without treatment, there is a chance that they could develop symptoms in the future.

To stop this happening, your child may need to take medicine to get rid of bacteria and prevent TB disease developing. This might be one medicine for six months or sometimes two medicines for three months. This measure to prevent disease is called TB prophylaxis. With a very young child or a child or young person with a weakened immunity, the risk of a TB contact leading to active TB disease is potentially greater. Therefore it is particularly important that they receive TB prophylaxis.

Important

- TB medicines come in liquid and tablet form in most cases. Talk to your pharmacist about the best formulation for your child and how best to give them.
- Keep the tablets or liquid in a safe place where children cannot reach them.
- Tablets and liquids should be stored at room temperature.
- It is important to take the dose as directed by the doctor, TB nurse or pharmacist.



- Particular foods, such as grapefruit can affect how the medicine is absorbed by the body. Speak to TB nurse or pharmacist if there are particular issues.
- While your child is having their treatment, it is also important that you tell your doctor, TB nurse or pharmacist about any other medicines your child is taking. This includes medicines on a prescription from your GP, medicines bought from a chemist or any homeopathic or herbal medicines.
- These medicines are prescribed specifically for your child. Do not give them to anyone else, even if they seem to have the same symptoms.
- Always order repeat prescriptions in plenty of time, at least one week before you need the tablets or liquids.
- The dose may change regularly as it is worked out according to your child's weight. As your child grows, the dose will increase. If you are not sure about your child's dose schedule, please check with your doctor, TB nurse or pharmacist.
- If the doctor decides to stop TB treatment, return any remaining tablets or liquid to the pharmacist. Do not flush them away.

Specific instructions for your child

Your child's TB nurse is _____

Telephone _____

**Out of hours, please call the hospital on 020 7405 9200
and ask to speak to the on call doctor for infectious diseases.**

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