

## **What happens when someone gets TB?**

Many people who have the disease never become sick, because their immune systems protect them from the tuberculosis germs. Only 5-10 percent of tuberculosis infected people become sick.

It is known, however, that people with weakened immune systems have a greater chance of becoming sick with tuberculosis. For example, HIV positive people and people living with AIDS who are infected with tuberculosis have more than a 30 times greater risk of becoming sick within a year's time than a person infected with just the tuberculosis germs.

## **Can TB be treated?**

Yes, TB can be treated. Once treatment is taken appropriately, an infected person eventually will no longer be able to pass on the infection.

# TUBERCULOSIS

**FIGHTING**  
**TUBERCULOSIS**

## **Introduction**

Tuberculosis (TB) kills nearly three (3) million people worldwide each year, 300,000 of whom are children.

Tuberculosis kills more adults each year than AIDS, Malaria and Dengue combined

## **What is TB?**

Tuberculosis is a communicable disease caused by infection with the tuberculosis bacteria, which attacks the lungs of adults and children

The bacteria infect the lungs and can also affect the spine, hips, lymph nodes and any other part of the body.

## **How is TB Spread?**

Tuberculosis can be spread by droplet infection. Like the common cold, tuberculosis is spread through the air, and by relatively casual contact.

When infected persons cough, sneeze, talk, sing or spit, the tuberculosis bacillus inside their lungs are sent out into the air where they can remain for hours and infect others.

## **How would I know if someone has TB?**

The early signs of TB are:

- Loss of appetite
- Fatigue
- Loss of weight

The advanced signs are:

- Fever
- Cough
- Night Sweats

Coughing may last for weeks and may produce bloody sputum.

Left untreated, fifty percent (50%) of tuberculosis patients will die within five years and most others will become very ill. Worse still, one person with active TB (undiagnosed) will infect 10-15 other people in the space of one year.

## **What should I do if I think I have TB?**

If you think you have TB, see your doctor or go to the nearest health centre immediately. TB is deadly but can be cured.