Answers to Common Questions about Tuberculosis

**TB? What is it?**

“TB” means tuberculosis. It is a bacterial infection caused by the bacillus *Mycobacterium Tuberculosis*.

**TB is still around?**

Yes! TB is the world’s second-leading infectious disease killer, killing 1.5 million worldwide in 2020. In the US, we saw around 7,000 cases in 2020. Kentucky had 57 cases of TB in 2021.

**Who can get TB?**

Anyone can get TB. Those most at risk are people who have been in close contact with someone with TB disease; immigrated from or spent a lot of time in another country where TB is common; are homeless; are living with HIV infection; live or work in congregate settings; and/or have a condition which weakens the immune system.

**Is it curable?**

Yes! Thanks to great therapeutic drugs, most TB case in the US are curable. Curing TB involves taking multiple drugs daily for 6 to 12 months.

**What are the symptoms of TB?**

Generally, they are weakness, weight loss, fever, night sweats. People also experience coughing, chest pain, and sometimes cough up blood.

**TB is only in the lungs, right?**

TB certainly does affect the lungs; however, TB can also affect any other part of the body including the brain, bones, or internal organs.

**How worried should I be about TB?**

Luckily, your public health and health care workers have been fighting hard against TB. TB is something you should be aware of, but it’s no reason to panic.

To learn more about TB in the United States visit [cdc.gov/tb](http://cdc.gov/tb)

To learn more about TB globally visit [who.int/health-topics/tuberculosis](http://who.int/health-topics/tuberculosis)