



## HOME ISOLATION FOR TUBERCULOSIS (TB)

### What is Tuberculosis?

Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease caused by bacteria. It can affect the lungs (respiratory) or other organs such as the bones, kidneys, liver, brain, joints, intestines, skin, lymph nodes and reproductive organs (non- respiratory).

TB is spread by droplets when someone with TB **disease** (called active TB) in their lungs or throat coughs, sneezes, or speaks, and bacteria are sent into the air.

See Facts About... Tuberculosis.

### What is Home Isolation?

People with active respiratory TB must stay home and limit activities with others to prevent the spread of TB.

Your doctor or public health nurse will let you know when you are no longer infectious to others and can resume activities.

### How do I protect people around me?

- No public transportation (i.e. buses, subways, trains, airplanes).
- No visiting public places (i.e. workplace, school, restaurant, grocery store shopping mall, movie theatre, houses of worship).
- No visitors in your home.
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissues or sleeve when you cough or sneeze.
- Throw used tissues in the garbage right away, and wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

## **When you are at home...**

- Sleep alone in a separate room.
- Open windows to air out the room as much as possible.
- Always wear a mask when you are around the people in your home.

## **Can I go outside?**

- Stay at home unless you need to attend a doctor's appointment.
- Re-schedule all non-urgent appointments (i.e. dentist appointment) until you are no longer contagious.
- Wear an N-95 mask to attend doctor's appointment or other medical testing (i.e. X-rays, blood work), and call ahead to let the office know you are coming.
- You may go for a short walk in your neighbourhood without wearing a mask, but stay away from other people.

## **How long is the isolation period?**

The length of time you are infectious is different for everyone and depends on how your body responds to the treatment. This period is determined by the results of your sputum tests, X-ray findings, and symptoms.

The home isolation period is different for everyone; it may last days, weeks, or months.

Your doctor or public health nurse will let you know when you are no longer at risk for spreading TB to others.

## **Remember...**

- Stay at home.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough.
- Wear a mask when you are around people.
- Take all your TB medications as instructed by your doctor.

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For more information, please call Durham Region Health Department  
at 905-668-7711 or 1-800-841-2729  
or visit our website at [www.durham.ca/TB](http://www.durham.ca/TB)