

Tuberculosis – Information Sheet

A colonisation of tuberculosis bacteria (*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*) has been detected in you or one of your relatives.

This sheet gives you all the necessary information on the pathogen and the hygiene measures necessary when you are in hospital.

The special features of tuberculosis bacteria

Inhaled tuberculosis bacteria cause an inflammatory reaction in the lungs. As long as the body's immune system functions well, the body forms capsules around the bacteria (closed form) and the tuberculosis does not need to be treated.

However, if the immune system is weakened, these capsules can dissolve and the bacteria get into the lungs and, as a result, into the air which we breathe. This open form of tuberculosis is infectious and must be treated. It can cause inflammation in other organs, for instance the kidneys, meninges (brain lining), lymph nodes, pleura (membranes round the ribs and lungs) or other abdominal organs. Only 10% of those infected become ill with tuberculosis.

How is it passed on?

Tuberculosis bacteria are airborne. When a carrier speaks, coughs, sneezes or sings, the bacteria are passed on and breathed in by other people in the form of droplets in the surrounding air.

For this reason, the following hygiene measures are necessary:



Special measures in hospital:

To prevent any bacteria from spreading in the hospital, the patient must comply with special hygiene measures:

- the patient must be accommodated strictly in a single room (isolation).
- the patient is not permitted to leave the room except and only after consulting nursing staff. Upon being asked to leave the room, you will be required to wear a face mask and disinfect your hands.

General conduct: (Patient)

- Hold a disposable handkerchief in front of your mouth when you cough.
- Disposable handkerchiefs must only be used once. They must be disposed of after only a single use.
- Disinfect your hands several times per day, especially after touching your face.

Special instructions for Visitors:

Visitors must report to nursing staff before visiting the patient. The nursing staff will inform you about the necessary hygiene and protective measures.

- Before entering the room, you must put on a **protective gown as well as a mouth and nose mask**.
- **Avoid** all unnecessary **contact with the patient's bed**; please sit on the chairs provided.
- If you have had close contact to your relative, you must disinfect your hands.
- **Immediately before you leave the room, it is vital that you disinfect your hands each time.**

From the dispenser apply an ample amount of hand disinfectant to your dry hands and rub it in until they are completely dry (minimum 30 seconds). Look at the pictures we have provided which will explain how to do this. If you have any questions, please consult a member of staff.

- **Never (!) leave the patient's room wearing the protective gown.**

We hope this information will be of help to you. Should you have any further questions, please consult the doctor in attendance, the hygiene specialists and/or the nursing staff.

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