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What happens if I get TB?

TB is a very serious disease, but you can be treated and make a full recovery.

What treatment will I get?

- The TB nurse/doctor will decide what treatment to give you depending on the type of TB that you have.
- You will need to take tablets daily, 7 days a week from Monday to Sunday, for at least 6 months to cure TB. You will get a treatment card to record tablets taken every day.
- You will have more sputum tests during treatment to make sure the TB treatment is working.

Will I get side effects from treatment?

- Sometimes TB treatment can cause side effects. Most side effects are mild and usually improve over time.
- If the side effects are bothering you, report them to your TB nurse/doctor before you decide to stop your treatment as some are easily treated.
- Your TB nurse/doctor will be able to support you to keep taking your treatment and treat any side effects. They may even change your treatment if the side effects are very bad.

Keep healthy by keeping appointments

- It is important for you to keep all your clinic appointments. Your TB nurse/doctor will check to see that your treatment is working and decide when to stop some or all of your tablets.
- It is important to plan how you will get to the clinic and also think of the things that may interfere with you getting to the clinic.
- You must let the TB nurse know if you are too sick to get to the clinic or something happens that makes it impossible for you to get to the clinic.
- Make sure you have the clinic telephone number so you can contact them to let them know you cannot attend.
- Try not to just stay away from the clinic without telling anyone.

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Can I miss a few doses or stop treatment early?

- No! Stopping too soon or not taking it correctly can allow TB bacteria to survive and become resistant to TB treatment. This makes TB difficult to treat, but not impossible.
- Check with your nurse/ doctor before using treatment from a shop or traditional healer - it may interfere with TB medication.

What happens if I take my TB treatment well?

- You should start feeling better.
- You should start gaining weight.
- You will be healthier.
- Your sputum tests should come back negative.
- You will be protecting your loved ones from infection.
- You may be able to return to work/school.

Visit the health facility urgently if you:

- Are breathing too fast to speak properly.
- Are coughing lots of blood.
- Have yellow skin or eyes.
- Are vomiting all your medicines.
- Have a skin rash that also involves the inside of your mouth.

What to do if you need to travel

- Try and stay in your current home until you have finished your treatment.
- If you are going away for less than two months:
  - Tell the clinic TB nurse and ask for enough treatment for the time that you are going to be away.
  - Never stop taking your TB treatment.
  - Always carry your treatment card with you so that you can get treatment at another clinic if needed.
- If you are going away for more than two months:
  - Tell the TB nurse the name of the clinic or the area you are going to before you leave.
  - Ask the TB nurse for a transfer letter.
  - Take your TB card to a clinic where you will be going to get your TB treatment.

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