

TB and Your Client :

SYMPTOMS OF TB



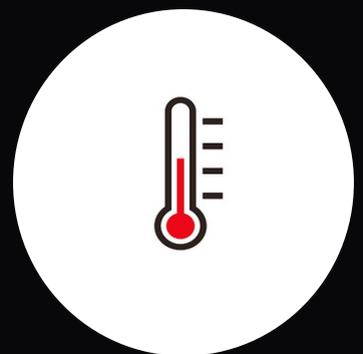
cough > 2 weeks



blood in sputum



chest pain



fever



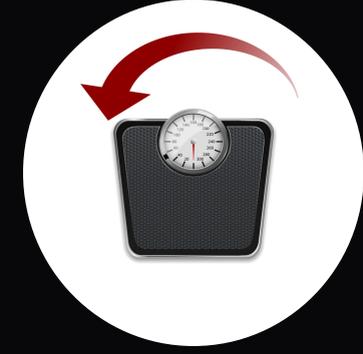
night sweats



tired, lazy



loss of appetite



weight loss



TB and Your Client:

As a healthcare provider, it is important to know the signs and symptoms of tuberculosis so that you recognize that your client is having symptoms. It's also important so that you can teach your clients who may be at risk for TB what symptoms to watch for. Unfortunately, the symptoms of TB are often minor at first and because they mimic other health problems, the diagnosis of TB is often delayed. For example, many people in First Nation communities don't recognize cough as a symptom because many people cough for various reasons. They may think their cough is from smoking or other health problems they have. A woman with night sweats who is in her 50s may think her night sweats are due to menopause. People with unhealthy lifestyles may think they don't feel well because they have been drinking or using drugs when they could have TB.

cough > 2 weeks: The cough from TB is initially dry but after several weeks to months will become productive. They will often cough up yellow or green sputum.

blood in sputum: Sometimes a person with active TB will start to cough up blood. Their sputum can be blood streaked or they can even cough up a large amount of blood. This happens because the growing TB bacteria are invading nearby blood vessels.

chest pain: People who complain of chest pain sometimes have TB in the lining of their lungs, the pleura. The pain is worse when they breathe in and can be very severe if there is a lot of fluid building up.

fever: Not everyone who has TB will have a fever. They may complain of feeling feverish even if their temperature is normal. If a person has a fever it is not usually a high fever and may come and go.

night sweats: Persons with active TB may have drenching night sweats several times a week or not at all. Children may also present with this symptom.

tired, lazy: Active TB often makes a person feel tired especially as their disease gets worse. They may sleep a lot or just feel unable to do the activities they normally would. They may describe it as feeling lazy.

loss appetite: People who are sick with TB may not feel like eating.

weight loss: As the disease progresses people start to lose weight. It is not unusual for people to present with 20-50lbs of weight loss that has occurred over a few months. Children may not lose weight but won't put on the weight they should be as they are growing.

Extrapulmonary TB – TB that occurs outside the lungs may have some constitutional symptoms such as fever, night sweats, fatigue and also pain or swelling or other symptoms in the affected organ or joint. TB can occur anywhere in the body: lymph nodes or glands, spine and other joints, brain and lining of the brain, abdomen, kidneys etc.

If your client is presenting with any symptoms of TB ensure they see a health care provider who can check them for TB by sending their sputum to the lab for testing, and getting a chest x-ray.

