

Is it TB or is it COVID-19?



	Tuberculosis	COVID-19
Transmission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spread through the air from one person to another by tiny droplets containing TB bacteria. • These droplets can stay in the air for hours. • Spread when a person with active TB of the lungs or throat coughs, speaks, or sings. • Droplets are inhaled. • NOT transmitted by surface contact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spread through respiratory droplets via talking, coughing, or sneezing. • Close personal contact, within 2 meters. • Sharing items. • Touching something with the virus on it, then touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands. • Can be spread before showing symptoms or without developing symptoms.
Infection Period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onset can be anywhere from weeks to years. • 90% of people who inhale the tiny droplet containing the TB bacteria will develop Latent TB Infection or LTBI. • LTBI has no symptoms and cannot be spread to others; however there is always a lifetime chance that LTBI can turn into Active TB disease. • Active TB can be transmitted to others. • Active TB is most commonly found in the lungs but can affect any part of the body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onset is typically between 2-14 days • Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to COVID-19.
Symptoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prolonged cough (2 weeks or longer) • Fever • Weight loss • Night sweats • Tiredness • Coughing up blood <p>** These symptoms may be mild for many months, thus leading to delays in seeking care and increasing the risk of spreading to others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New or worsening cough. • Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing. • Fever, temperature equal to or over 38°C. • Chills. • Tiredness or weakness • Muscle or body aches • New loss of smell or taste • Some people may not show symptoms
Testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuberculin Skin Test (TST) • Chest X-Ray • Sputum collection • Results vary from 48 hours to a few days or weeks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nasal swab • Nasopharyngeal swab • Results available relatively quickly
Treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active TB is treated with multiple antibiotics for at least 6 months to 9 months. • Latent TB Infection is treated with antibiotics for 3 months to 9 months depending on what course of antibiotics are appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most people with mild COVID-19 will recover on their own with rest, fluid and treating symptoms such as sore throat, fever or muscle aches with over the counter medication (Tylenol). • Some people with Covid-19 will need to be hospitalized for Oxygen and breathing support. • People with COVID-19 or close contact with person infected with COVID-19 will need to isolate or quarantine.
Prevention 	<p>Contact your local health centre if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are experiencing any symptoms of TB. • You have been around anyone with Active TB or suspected Active TB. • You have had TB diagnosis in the past and had no/incomplete treatment. 	<p>Public Health recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; • Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth, especially with unwashed hands; • Avoid close contact with people who are sick; • Cough and sneeze into your sleeve and not your hands; • Stay home if you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others; • Always follow public health guidelines and recommendations. • If you are eligible, it is recommended that you get your COVID-19 vaccine.

If you would like more information, please contact the NITHA TB program at: (306) 953-5000.