

Texas Department of State Health Services
Tuberculosis and Hansen's Disease Section
Preventing the Spread of Tuberculosis

Why are TB Isolation and Restrictions Important?

Tuberculosis (TB) disease, especially TB of the lungs, can spread to others. To prevent this, you may be placed in **TB isolation with restrictions** to limit spreading the disease.

TB isolation and restrictions are temporary measures to keep others safe.

Isolation Settings

1. **Home Isolation:** If your health department TB provider determines it's safe, you may stay at home. It is important to follow all the instructions given by your health department TB provider.
2. **Hospital Isolation:** In some cases, you may need to stay in a hospital where special measures are in place to prevent the spread of TB. The hospital will provide instructions on what measures are needed.

Isolation Guidelines

1. **Stay in your designated area:** If you are on home isolation, stay in a separate, well-ventilated room and avoid common areas.
2. **Wear a mask:** If you must be around others (e.g., going to medical appointments), wear a surgical mask to reduce the spread of TB.
3. **Limit visitors:** Restrict visitors to only essential people. They should also wear N-95 or similar masks and follow infection control guidelines.
4. **Cover your mouth and nose:** Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing, sneezing, or laughing. Dispose of tissues properly. Wash hands after.
5. **No public spaces:** Avoid going to public places like work, school, shopping centers, bars, restaurants, or places of worship until your health department TB provider clears you.
6. **Follow medical advice:** Take all medications as prescribed. It's critical to follow your treatment plan for the full time (anywhere from 4-6 months, up to 12 months) to cure TB and reduce transmission risk.
7. **Ventilation:** Open windows to ensure good airflow and reduce the number of TB bacteria in the air.

Following the guidelines is essential. If you have trouble following the guidelines, notify your health department TB provider immediately for their medical guidance.

Restrictions During Isolation

1. **Work and School:** You may not return to work or school until your health department TB provider has allowed you to do so.
2. **Travel:** Do not travel on public transportation (buses, planes, etc.) until your health department TB provider has allowed you to do so. If traveling for medical care, arrange private transport and inform the health department in advance.
3. **Contact with Others:** Avoid close contact with anyone, particularly children, elderly individuals, and those with weakened immune systems, as they are more susceptible to infection.

Questions about restrictions during isolation should be directed to your health department TB provider.

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How Long Will TB Isolation and Restrictions Last?

Isolation and restrictions are temporary. It may stop once:

- Your health department TB provider reviews the duration of your TB doses and overall status.
- You are showing improvement in your symptoms.
- Other tests, if necessary, are collected and the health department TB provider has reviewed the results.

When TB Isolation and Restrictions End

1. Once your health department TB provider confirms that you may be released from TB isolation and restrictions, you will be allowed to resume normal activities, including returning to work, school, and public spaces. You must wait for their clearance.
2. It's essential to continue taking your medication as prescribed, even after the TB isolation and restriction period ends, to ensure a full recovery and prevent the development of drug-resistant TB.

Support During TB Isolation and Restrictions

Isolation can be challenging, both physically and emotionally. It's important to:

- Keep in touch with family and friends through phone calls, video chats, or messaging.
- Inform your healthcare team if you need any support, including access to mental health services.
- If you need help with groceries or other necessities, ask your support network or healthcare team to assist you during this time.

Key Points to Remember:

- **TB isolation and restrictions are temporary** and essential to prevent the spread of TB.
- **Take your medications as prescribed** for the entire course of treatment.
- **Follow health department rules carefully** to protect others from getting infected.

If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact your health department TB care team.

Masking and Cough Etiquette



Wear a surgical mask to prevent breathing out the TB bacteria into the air. Wear these masks in health care settings, around the young, sick, or elderly, and/or at home when around household members until the health department says they are no longer necessary. *Use a new mask when it becomes dirty or wet.*



Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing; use the upper sleeve, not your hands.

Place all used tissues in waste basket and wash hands with soap and warm water.