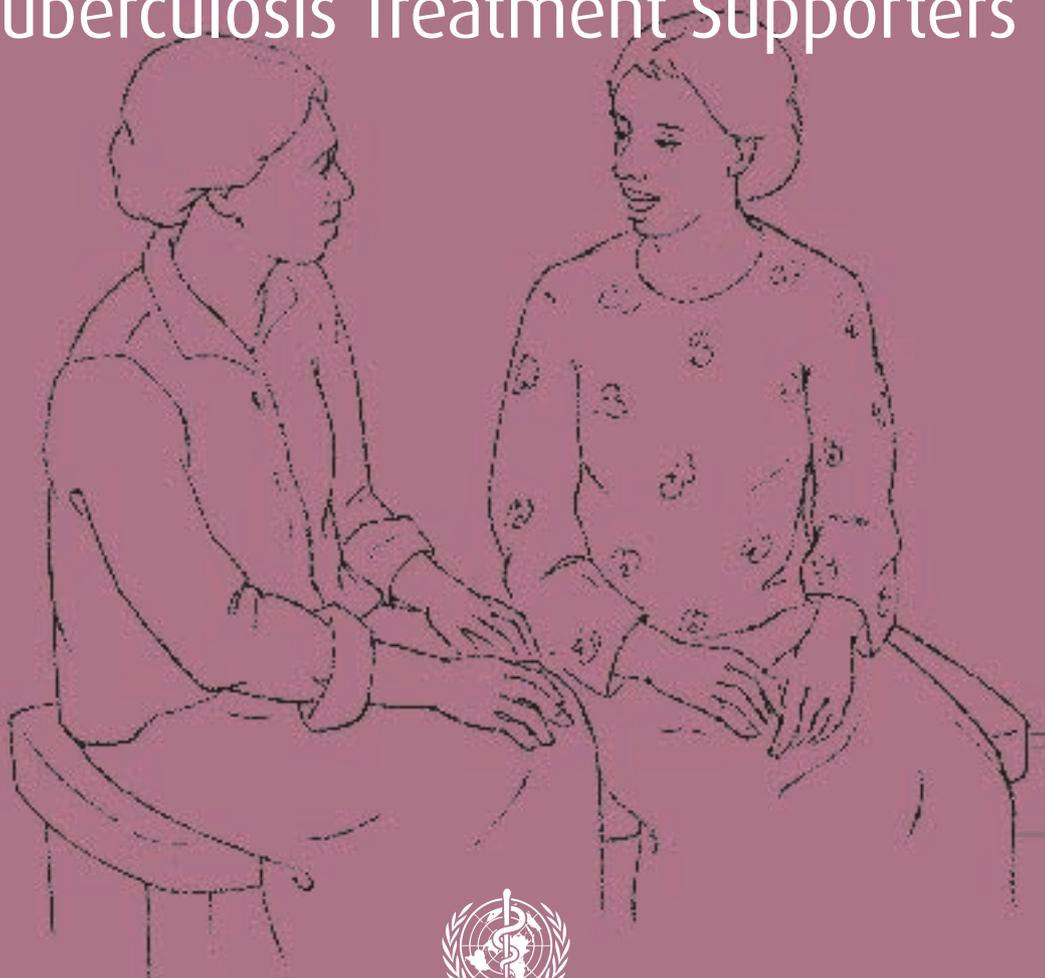


A G U I D E F O R
Tuberculosis Treatment Supporters



World Health Organization
2002

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A G U I D E F O R Tuberculosis Treatment Supporters

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1. *What is Tuberculosis?*

Tuberculosis, or TB, is a disease caused by germs.

TB germs can settle anywhere in the body. We

most often hear about TB of the lungs. The TB germ makes many more germs that damages parts of the body, such as the person's lungs. When the lungs are damaged the person cannot breathe easily. TB can be cured with the right treatment. If the person does not get the right treatment he can die from TB. TB in the lungs is dangerous for other people because it spreads easily from person to person.

TB is a disease caused by germs. It spreads most easily when it is in a person's lungs.

2. *What are the symptoms of TB?*

TB symptoms depend on where the TB germs are in the body. The general symptoms of TB are:

- Fever
- Sweating at night, even when the weather is cold
- Loss of appetite and weight loss
- Tiredness

When TB is in the lungs, the major symptom is cough that continues for a long time (more than 2 to 3 weeks). The patient also produces a great deal of sputum (mucus and saliva) that may contain blood.

Some symptoms of TB can look like other illnesses, so it is important that the person gets a check up at a health facility.

People with TB have many different symptoms. The major symptom of TB in the lungs is coughing for more than 2 to 3 weeks. It is best to go to a health facility for a check up.

3. *How is TB spread?*

TB spreads to others when someone with TB coughs or sneezes.

TB in the lungs is dangerous for other people because it spreads easily. TB is spread when a person sick with TB coughs or sneezes. The TB germs are sprayed into the air. These germs go inside another person's lungs when he breathes the air that has these germs. It is easy to pass these germs on to family members when there are many people living in a small closed-in space, and there is not enough fresh air. Anyone can get TB.



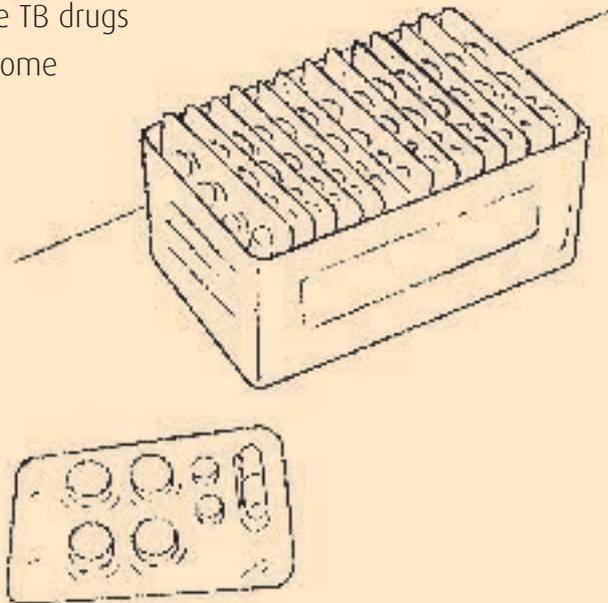
4. *Why is it so important for a TB patient to take the correct TB drugs for the full duration of the treatment?*

It is important for the TB patient to take all the TB drugs regularly, on schedule, for the full duration of the treatment or else the disease may become incurable.

The drugs that kill the TB germs are called “TB drugs”. TB can be cured if the patient takes the TB drugs regularly, on schedule, for the full duration of the treatment, even if he feels better after having taken treatment for some time.

TB can cause death if it is not correctly and completely treated. The patient will continue to transmit TB to others in the family or community if he does not take all his TB drugs. Taking only some of the drugs or not completing the whole treatment will not cure TB. It is dangerous not to follow the treatment correctly and take only some of the TB drugs because the disease may then become incurable.

Some people have to spend some time in hospital. Most of the treatment to cure TB can be given at home but **must** be taken as explained by the health care worker.



5. *How can a TB patient prevent the spread of TB?*

- By taking treatment and being cured of TB to prevent the spread of TB to others in the family and in the community.
- By covering his/her mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing.

Make sure that people in contact with the TB patient, particularly children and adults who are coughing, are examined for TB.

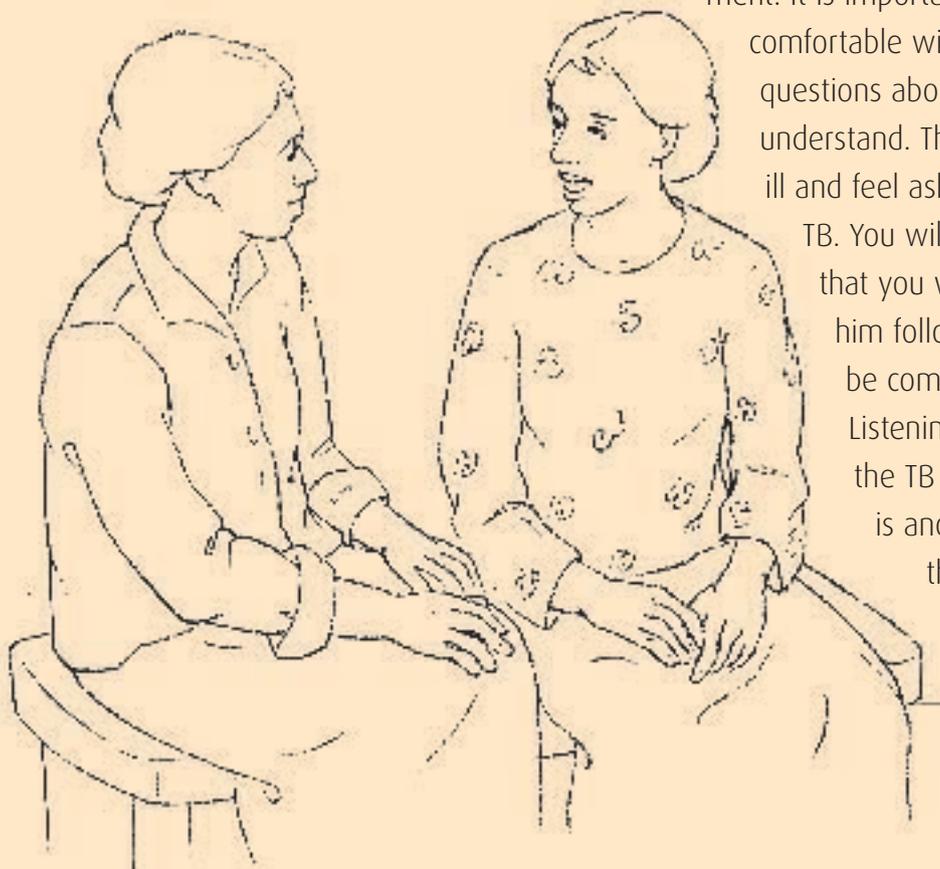
Prevent TB by:

- taking treatment and being cured of TB
- covering his/her mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing



6. ***What is your role as a TB Treatment Supporter?***

The patient has chosen you as the TB Treatment Supporter and trusts you. Your main role is to make sure that the patient takes the TB drugs regularly, on schedule, for the full duration of the treat-



The TB Treatment Supporter's main role is to make sure that the patient takes the TB drugs regularly, on schedule, for the full duration of the treatment. You will also need to listen and encourage the patient as part of this support.

ment. It is important that the patient feels comfortable with you so he can ask questions about things he does not understand. The patient may be very ill and feel ashamed about having TB. You will need to reassure him that you will be there to help him follow his treatment and be completely cured of TB. Listening to and encouraging the TB patient and his family is another way of supporting the TB patient.

7. *What are your tasks as the TB Treatment Supporter?*

Your tasks as the TB Treatment Supporter are very important. You must:

- Agree on a time and place to meet with the TB patient. Do not make the patient wait.
- Give the patient the TB drugs at each appointment according to the schedule. Look at the drugs to be sure they are correct. Watch the patient swallow all the drugs.
- Record on the TB Treatment Card each time the patient takes the drugs. (The TB Treatment Card is explained in the next section in this booklet.)
- Be aware of possible side effects. Have the patient eat food with the drugs if needed to reduce nausea. Refer the patient to the health facility if he continues to have side effects.
- Encourage the patient to continue coming for TB treatment.
- Respond quickly if the patient misses a scheduled treatment. When a patient misses a dose for more than 24 hours, visit the patient's home. Find out the problem that caused the interruption. Give the treatment. If unable to find the patient or convince the patient to continue the treatment, contact the health centre for help without delay.

- Go to the health centre to collect a re-supply of drugs each month. Show the patient's TB Treatment Card. Review how the patient is doing and discuss any problems.
- Make arrangements if you or the patient will be away for a few days. Give the patient enough drugs to take himself for a maximum of one week or refer the patient to the health facility to decide what is to be done. Someone else may be asked to help during this time.
- Be sure the patient goes to the health facility when he is due for a follow-up sputum exam.

As the TB Treatment Supporter, you provide ongoing support to the TB patient:

- **Watches the patient take the right TB drugs**
- **Marks the TB treatment card after the drugs are taken**
- **Encourage the patient to continue coming for TB treatment**
- **Makes sure there is always a supply of drugs for the patient**
- **Refers the patient to the health facility if there are problems**
- **Makes sure the patient goes to the health facility when he is due for a follow-up sputum exam.**

8. How do you use the TB Treatment Card?

Mark the TB Treatment Card each time the patient takes the TB drugs.

To kill the TB germs, the patient must take the TB drugs according to the schedule. You are there to support the patient and to help make sure the patient takes the drugs correctly. The TB Treatment Card will help you to ensure that you give the patient the right TB drugs at the correct time. It is important for you to **watch** the patient take the TB drugs as scheduled and then **mark** it on the TB Treatment Card.

You will take the TB Treatment Card to the health facility before all of the TB drugs are finished. The health facility staff will look at the TB Treatment Card to know if the patient has been taking the TB drugs on schedule and will give you the patient's next supply of drugs.

Mark ✓ on the correct day on the TB Treatment Card each time the patient takes the TB drugs.

Month	Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
June		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓														
July																																
August																																



9. How do you give the TB drugs?

The staff at the Health Centre will write on the TB Treatment Card for your patient how many of each TB drug the patient should take at each appointment.

When the patient comes to you:

- Take out the patient's TB Treatment Card
- Pour a glass of water for your patient (If the patient gets nausea, he can take the TB drugs with food, milk or gruel)
- Take out all the TB drugs



You must watch the patient swallow all the drugs each time

that the patient should take today

- Put the tablets into the patient's hand and then watch the patient swallow the tablets one at a time. If the patient finds it difficult to swallow them one after the other, let him or her take a short breathing space. The TB drugs must be



taken together to make sure they work together

- Record the treatment on the TB Treatment Card.



10. What are the possible side effects/bad reactions to TB drugs?

The TB may have side effects. The patient should tell you when there are any so you know what to do

Tell the patient that sometimes there are reactions or side effects from the TB drugs. The patient should tell you if any of these occur. Some reactions are not dangerous and you only need to reassure the patient. Other reactions may be dangerous so you must stop the treatment and send the patient immediately to a health facility.

Reaction	Your Response
<p>Not Dangerous:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Nausea, no desire to eat, stomach ache, gas● Orange/red urine● Pain in the joints● Burning sensation in the feet <p>Dangerous:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Skin rash and itching● Skin and/or eyes turn yellow● Vomiting repeatedly● Deafness● Dizziness● Visual impairment	<p>Continue treatment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● reassure the patient and give drugs with food, milk or gruel● reassure the patient● refer the patient to the health centre● refer the patient to the health centre <p>STOP treatment and send the patient immediately to a health facility for any dangerous side effects</p>

11. You can make a real difference.

Making sure that the patient takes the TB drugs correctly will help to cure the TB patient. By listening to and encouraging the patient you help to strengthen his will to complete the whole TB treatment. When the patient takes the TB drugs correctly it will also help prevent TB from spreading to other family members and to the community.

The TB Treatment Supporter helps the patient get well and prevents TB spreading to the family and community.



KEY MESSAGES

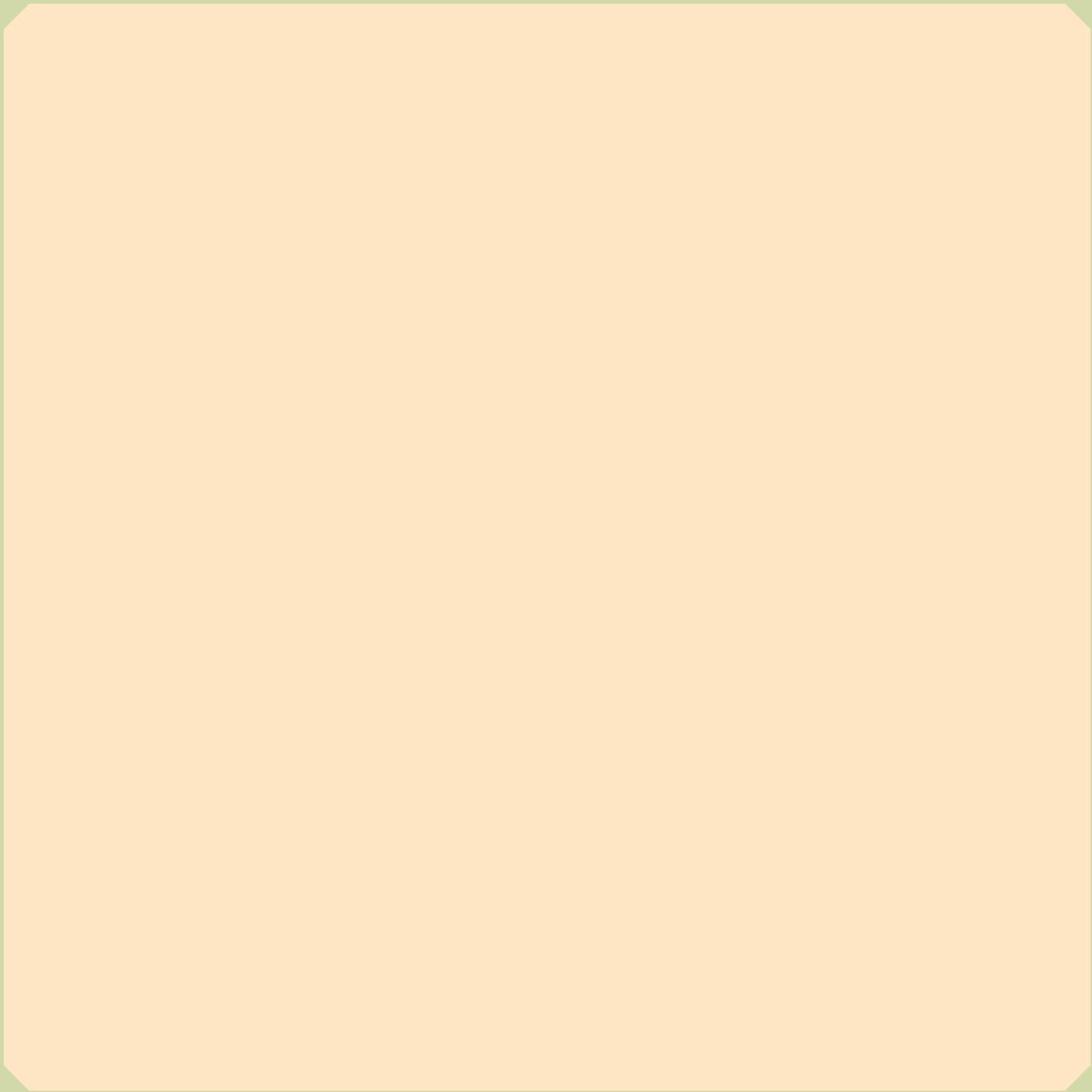
1. TB is a disease caused by germs. It spreads most easily when it is in a person's lungs.
2. People with TB have many different symptoms. The major symptom of TB in the lungs is coughing for more than 2 to 3 weeks. It is best to go to a health facility for a check up.
3. TB spreads to others when someone with TB coughs or sneezes.
4. It is important for the TB patient to take all the TB drugs regularly, on schedule, for the full duration of the treatment or else the disease may become incurable.
5. Prevent TB by:
 - taking treatment and being cured of TB
 - covering your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
6. The TB Treatment Supporter's main role is to make sure that the patient takes the TB drugs regularly, on schedule, for the full duration of the treatment. You will also need to listen and encourage the patient as part of this support.

7. As the TB Treatment Supporter you provide ongoing support to the patient :
 - Watches the patient take the right TB drugs
 - Marks the TB Treatment Card after the drugs are taken
 - Encourages the patient to continue coming for TB treatment
 - Makes sure there is always a supply of drugs for the patient
 - Refers the patient to the health facility if there are problems
 - Makes sure the patient goes to the health facility when he is due for a follow-up sputum exam.
8. Mark the TB Treatment Card each time the patient takes the TB drugs.
9. You must watch the patient swallow the drugs each time.
10. TB treatment may have side effects. The patient should tell you when there are any so you know what to do.
11. The TB Treatment Supporter helps the patient get well and prevents TB from spreading to the family and community.

Notes



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