






# MEDICINES TO TREAT AND CURE TUBERCULOSIS

These are the common medicines used to treat TB. In some situations you may be given medicine not listed here. The Public Health Nurse will give you information about those other medicines, if needed. For complete instructions and information about your medicine and their side-effects, talk to your doctor or a pharmacist.

	Medication	# Taken	Dosage
	<b>ISONIAZID (ISOTAMINE, INH)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This medicine is used to prevent tuberculosis (TB) and treat TB disease.</li> <li>It can affect your liver.</li> </ul>		
	<b>RIFAMPIN (ROFACT, RIFADIN, RMP)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This medicine is used to prevent TB and treat TB disease.</li> <li>It will turn tears, sweat and urine an orange colour. If contact lenses are worn, they could get stained.</li> <li>It causes birth control pills to be less effective. Condoms should be used.</li> </ul>		
	<b>PYRAZINAMIDE (TEBRAZID, PZA)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This medicine is used to treat TB disease.</li> <li>It can cause pain in your joints.</li> </ul>		
	<b>ETHAMBUTOL (ETIBI, EMB)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This medicine is used to treat TB disease.</li> <li>It can affect your eyesight. You should have your vision checked by a doctor if you have been taking this medication for a long time and in high doses.</li> </ul>		
	<b>Vitamins</b>		
	<b>PYRIDOXINE (Vitamin B6)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This medicine is used to prevent damage to the nerves caused by the medicine Isoniazid.</li> </ul>		

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# MEDICINES TO TREAT AND CURE TUBERCULOSIS..continued

## Why should I take my TB medicine?

TB disease can be cured if you take your TB medicine as directed. You may have to take your TB medicine for six months to two years. It is important to take all your TB medicine until your TB doctor or nurse tells you to stop. You must continue taking your TB medicine even if you are feeling well. Although you may be feeling well, it does not mean the disease is completely gone. If you stop taking your TB medicine too soon, you may not be cured. The TB germs may become stronger and drug-resistant.

## How do I take my TB medicine?

- Use a pill organizer (also called a dosette) to help you remember to take your medicine everyday and prevent errors. The Public Health Nurse (PHN) or Health Outreach Worker (HOW) will give you a pill organizer and help you fill it correctly.
- Measure liquid medicine with a syringe, medicine spoon or medicine cup. Do not use kitchen spoons as they are not accurate.
- Take all TB medicine at one time, unless given different instructions by your doctor or nurse.
- Take your TB medicine around the same time each day so you don't forget. On the days your HOW visits, take your TB medicine during the visit.
- Tell your TB doctor, PHN or HOW if you have symptoms or feel sick while on TB medicine.
- To help you remember to take your TB medicine everyday, you can:
  - ask a family member or friend to remind you
  - use a calendar to check off the days when you have taken your medicine
  - set the alarm on your watch or cell phone for the time you need to take your medicine
  - write a note and post it on the bathroom mirror
- Do not share your medicine with other people.
- Do not use medicine after the expiry date on the label.
- Do not drink alcohol while taking TB medicine because alcohol can damage your liver.
- Tell your TB doctor, PHN or HOW two to three weeks before your medicine runs out so your next supply can be ordered.
- Your HOW will check your dosette at each visit and will check your medicine bottles on an ongoing basis.



## How do I Store TB Medicine?

- Keep all medicine out of reach of children.
- Store TB medicine at room temperature in a dry place, unless the label gives you different directions.
- Keep your medicine with you in a purse or carry-on luggage when you travel.

# MEDICINES TO TREAT AND CURE TUBERCULOSIS..continued

## What if I Forget to Take my Medication?

If you forget a dose of your TB medicine, take it as soon as possible, but never take two doses at one time or close together. Tell your TB doctor, PHN or HOW about any missed doses.

If you miss more than one dose, call your doctor for advice and tell your PHN or HOW. The PHN or HOW can help you find a way to remember to take your medicines.

## Will TB Medicine Cause any Side-Effects?

Medicine can sometimes cause unwanted side-effects. In most cases, they are not serious, but some side-effects require medical attention. If you develop any side-effects, report them to your doctor, PHN or HOW. Watch for:

- itching, skin rash, hives, trouble breathing, swelling of the face or throat, tingling or numbness around the mouth
- tingling or numbness of fingers or toes
- fever for three days or more
- flu-like symptoms (fever, chills, dizziness, weakness, muscle aches)
- new cough
- loss of sensation or muscle control
- aching, painful or swollen joints
- loss of appetite
- fatigue, feeling very tired or weak
- upset stomach, nausea, vomiting
- stomach cramps or abdominal pain
- diarrhea
- yellow skin or eyes (jaundice); very dark urine
- bruising or easy bleeding from cuts
- blurred vision, trouble telling the difference between red and green (colour blindness), or other changes in your vision
- feeling dizzy or unsteady

**Other side-effects not listed may also occur.**

Important: If you notice any symptoms or you think you have a side-effect to your TB medicine, contact your doctor, nurse or call Telehealth for advice at 1-866-797-0000. If you have serious side-effects during evenings, weekends or holidays, visit the nearest Emergency Department.

# MEDICINES TO TREAT AND CURE TUBERCULOSIS..continued

## Isoniazid (Isotamine)

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Isoniazid is an antibiotic that kills TB germs. It can be used to:

- Treat active TB disease in combination with other TB medicine
- Treat latent TB infection (LTBI)

### What should I know about taking this medicine?

- Take this medicine with a full glass of water on an empty stomach (one hour before food or two hours after food). If it upsets your stomach take it with a small amount of food.
- A liquid form of the medicine is available if you have trouble swallowing the pills.
- Take this medicine at least two hours before you take an antacid.
- Vitamin B6 may be given to prevent numbness/tingling feeling in your fingers and toes.
- Some medicines for epilepsy and seizures (e.g., Dilantin) do not work as well while taking Isoniazid.
- Red wine, some aged cheeses (e.g., Swiss, Cheshire) and fish (tuna, skipjack, sardines) may cause flushing/redness or itching of the skin, feeling hot, fast or pounding heartbeat, sweating, chills or clammy feelings, headache or feeling lightheaded.
- Mild stomach upset is common.

Watch for:

- Nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, abdominal pain
- Fatigue or feeling tired, weakness
- Fever for three days or more
- Numbness or tingling feeling in the fingers and toes
- Itching, skin rash
- Dark urine, yellow eyes or skin (jaundice)
- Other side-effects not listed may also occur in some people. If you notice other symptoms or side-effects contact your doctor for advice.

## Rifampin (Rofact, Rifadin)

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Rifampin is an antibiotic that kills TB germs. It can be used to:

- Treat active TB disease in combination with other TB medicine
- Treat latent TB infection (LTBI)

### What should I know about taking this medicine?

- Take this medicine with a full glass of water on an empty stomach (one hour before food or two hours after food). If it upsets your stomach, take it with a small amount of food.
- Take the capsule whole if possible. If you have trouble swallowing the capsule, it can be opened and mixed with a small amount of soft food, such as applesauce, pudding or yogurt.
- A liquid form of the medicine is available if you have trouble swallowing the capsule.

# MEDICINES TO TREAT AND CURE TUBERCULOSIS..continued

- Birth control pills do not work as well while taking rifampin. Use other methods of birth control to prevent pregnancy.
- It may turn body fluids (urine, sweat, tears, saliva and feces) dark yellow or orange-red colour. This is not harmful and will go away at the end of your treatment, however, soft contact lenses and clothing may be permanently stained.
- Mild stomach upset is common.

Watch for:

- Nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, abdominal pain
- Fatigue or feeling tired, weakness
- Fever for three days or more
- Flu-like symptoms (fever, chills, dizziness, weakness)
- Itching, skin rash
- Dark urine, yellow eyes or skin (jaundice)
- Bone or joint pain
- Changes in menstruation
- Other side-effects not listed may also occur in some people. If you notice any other symptoms or side-effects contact your doctor for advice.

## Ethambutol (Etibi)

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Ethambutol is an antibiotic that stops the growth of TB germs. It can be used to:

- Treat active TB disease, in combination with other TB medicine

### What should I know about taking this medicine?

- Swallow the tablets whole, if possible, with water or juice. It is best not to crush or chew the tablets.
- It can be taken with or without food.
- Do not take antacids within four hours of taking this medicine.
- If you take this medicine for a long time, your doctor will arrange to have your eyes checked.
- Report any changes in vision to your doctor immediately.

Watch for:

- Blurred vision, trouble telling the difference between red and green (colour blindness), eye pain or any other eye problems
- Sudden confusion
- Dizziness, fatigue
- Fever
- Nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, abdominal pain
- Itching, skin rash
- Pain or swelling of joints
- Other side-effects not listed may also occur in some people. If you notice any other symptoms or side-effects contact your doctor for advice.

# MEDICINES TO TREAT AND CURE TUBERCULOSIS..continued

## Pyrazinamide (Tebrazid)

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Pyrazinamide is an antibiotic that kills TB bacteria. It is used to:

- Treat active TB disease, in combination with other TB medicine

### What should I know about taking this medicine?

- Swallow the tablets whole, if possible, with water or juice. It is best not to crush or chew the tablets.
- It can be taken with or without food.
- It may cause skin to become sensitive to sunlight and develop a rash. Therefore, limit exposure to the sun, wear protective clothing and use strong sunscreens on skin and lips.
- It may interfere with the management of diabetes.
- You will take this medicine for two months or longer.

Watch for:

- Red, swollen or painful joints – especially big toe, ankle and knee
- Fatigue, weakness, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting
- Dark urine, yellow eyes or skin (jaundice)
- Increased sensitivity to sunlight – causing pink or reddish-brown rash or discolouration of the skin
- Other side-effects not listed may also occur in some people. If you notice any other symptoms or side-effects contact your doctor for advice.

## Pyridoxine (Vitamin B6)

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Pyridoxine is a B vitamin that is used to prevent or treat Vitamin B6 deficiency (low levels of Vitamin B6), which can sometimes be caused by Isoniazid. Vitamin B6 deficiency may cause inflammation of the nerve endings causing you to feel numbness and tingling in your fingers and toes.

### What should I know about taking this medicine?

- You may not need to take this vitamin if you are able to get enough as part of a healthy diet.
- Do not take more than the prescribed amount of Vitamin B6.
- Check with your doctor before you take a multi-vitamin, as it may contain Pyridoxine.
- Notify your doctor if numbness or tingling feeling in your hands or feet persists or gets worse.

Watch for:

- Nausea, headaches, drowsiness
- Clumsiness or awkwardness
- Other side-effects not listed may also occur in some people. If you notice any other symptoms or side-effects contact your doctor for advice.