

Information for Patients on Anti-TB Drug Treatment

TB & Chest Service Telephone InfoLine: 2572 6024

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Information for Patients on Anti-TB Drug Treatment

The chest clinics of the Department of Health provide Directly Observed Treatment (DOT) service for tuberculosis (TB) patients who are required to receive anti-TB drug treatment under the supervision of nurses in the clinics. This is an important strategy recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (IUATLD) in the control of TB. It aims to prevent treatment failure and emergence of drug-resistant TB.

1. Anti-TB Drug Treatment Service

There are a total of 12 full-time government chest clinics located in different parts of the territory. You may bring along with you the treatment card (pink card) when you visit any one of the nearby chest clinics.

Except Tai Po Chest Clinic, the service hours at full-time chest clinics for patients to take anti-TB drugs are:

Mondays to Fridays:	8:00 am – 1:00 pm 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Saturdays:	8:00 am – 1:00 pm
Sundays and Public Holidays:	Closed

For Tai Po Chest Clinic, the service hours for patients to take anti-TB drugs are:

Mondays to Fridays:	9:00 am – 1:00 pm 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Saturdays:	9:00 am – 1:00 pm
Sundays and Public Holidays:	Closed

Please note:

(a) When Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 signal is hoisted, all chest clinics will be closed.

Mondays to Fridays :	If Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No.8 is changed to lower signals at or before 4:30 pm, DOT service will resume in the evening. If Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No.8 is not lowered before 4:30 pm, DOT service will remain closed in the evening.
Saturdays :	If Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No.8 is not lowered before 11:00 am, DOT service will continue to be suspended.

(b) Black Rainstorm Signal

If Black Rainstorm Signal is announced before 8:00 am, DOT service will be suspended.

☂ If Black Rainstorm Signal is announced during service hours, patients should stay indoor and attend the clinic for drug treatment after the signal is withdrawn.

Mondays to Fridays :	If Black Rainstorm Signal is not withdrawn at or before 4:30 pm, DOT service will continue to be suspended.
Saturdays :	If Black Rainstorm Signal is not withdrawn before 11:00 am, DOT service will continue to be suspended.

2. Medical Consultation Service

If you experience any discomfort after medication, you should return to the clinic where your clinic records are kept for medical consultation. For emergencies outside office hours, you are advised to bring along your consultation and treatment cards and visit the Accident and Emergency Department of the nearby hospital.

If there is no problem with your medication, you should attend the chest clinic for follow-up as scheduled.

Registration hours (For Medical Consultation)

Mondays :	8:30 am – 12:30 pm 1:45 pm – 5:15 pm
Tuesdays to Fridays :	8:30 am – 12:30 pm 1:45 pm – 5:00 pm

3. Points to Note During Anti-TB Drug Treatment:

- a. In general, patients are required to take at least 6 months of anti-TB drugs. The doctor may adjust the drug regimen for individual patient when indicated.
- b. To facilitate drug absorption in the empty stomach, you are advised not to take food for 2 hours before and after taking drugs.
- c. Disposable cups and drinking water are provided by the clinics. You may take the drugs with the drinking water provided or with the juice you bring along. Avoid taking drugs with milk, glucose-rich beverages, aerated waters or beer.
- d. Closely adhere to the treatment schedule and stay in Hong Kong during the period of anti-TB treatment. In case of an urgent need for leaving the territory, you should seek advice from the doctor.
- e. Maintain a balanced diet by consuming different kinds of meat, vegetables, fruits, eggs and milk. However, patients with chronic diseases need to follow medical advice on food consumption.
- f. Stop smoking and avoid drinking alcohol. Alcohol can interact with the anti-TB drugs and predispose to the risks of hepatitis and gouty arthritis.
- g. Cover the nose and mouth with tissue paper during sneezing and coughing to prevent the spread of the tubercle bacilli.
- h. Do not spit in public areas. Sputum should be flushed away in toilet or wrapped up in tissue paper before disposal in covered dust-bins.
- i. Once patient is started on drug treatment, the risk of spreading the infection is greatly reduced. Thus, isolation of the patient is not necessary. However, at the beginning of treatment, infectious patients are advised not to have close contact with young children and persons with impaired body immunity.
- j. Keep a well ventilated and hygienic living environment.
- k. Adequate rest is conducive to recovery.
- l. Take the accurate dose of drugs at the scheduled time. Irregular drug taking will induce some of the bacteria inside your body to develop resistance to the drugs that will cause difficulty for your full recovery. Nurses will trace those patients who fail to turn up at the scheduled time for medication through telephone contact or home visiting, so as to understand and try to help with their problems and conditions provide necessary assistance.
- m. Ensure that the correct address and contact telephone number are provided, so that the clinic staff can promptly contact you and arrange necessary follow-up for you whenever any abnormal blood or sputum test results are received. Inform the clinic staff if there are any changes in personal particulars.

4. Points to Note for New Patients Who are Started on Anti-TB Treatment:

- a. Urine test is done for patients to check for diabetes and excess protein in urine.
- b. Blood specimens will be taken to test for liver and kidney functions as well as hepatitis B antigen carrier. Blood test for HIV antibody will be performed on a voluntary basis.
- c. After you took the first dose of anti-TB drugs, you are advised to stay in the chest clinic for at least 15 minutes so that the nurses could closely observe you for signs of side-effect. Notify the nurse if you experience any drug reactions. If there is no reaction after 15 minutes, inform the nurse before you leave the clinic.

5. Possible Drug Reactions:

Most patients do not develop side effects from taking anti-TB drugs. However, you need to report to the nurses if you experience any discomfort after drug taking.

There may be some “normal” reactions that patients do not need to see doctors. These reactions include: reddish orange discoloration in stool, tear, urine or nasal discharge 4 to 6 hours after medication, transient nausea, flushing, and transient numbness around the mouth.

Patients have to stop taking drug and seek prompt medical advice if they have the following symptoms : dizziness, persistent nausea, vomiting, reduced appetite, jaundice (yellowish discoloration of skin and sclera), fever, itchiness, skin rash, tinnitus (ringing sound in the ears), visual disturbance, joint pain or any other physical discomfort in case of doubt.

Possible side effects of some commonly used anti-TB drugs: -

a. Rifampicin : hepatitis, nausea and vomiting, bruises and petechiae, ‘flu’ syndrome

b. Isoniazid : hepatitis, numbness of hands and feet.

c. Ethambutol : reduced visual acuity, disturbance of vision and change of colour vision

d. Pyrazinamide : hepatitis, joint pain.

e. Streptomycin : tinnitus, giddiness.

6. Points to Note for Female Patients:

- a. Female patients receiving anti-TB drugs should avoid pregnancy as far as possible. This is because physiological changes during pregnancy may affect the drug treatment. Moreover, certain drugs like streptomycin may affect the hearing function of the fetus if it is given during pregnancy.
- b. Female patients on oral contraceptive pills should consider alternative contraceptive methods because the anti-tuberculosis drugs will reduce the effectiveness of the contraceptive pills. Patients may seek advice on contraception from their family doctors, the Family Health Service or the Family Planning Association.
- c. You have to inform clinic doctor as soon as possible if you are confirmed pregnant during the course of treatment.

7. Procedures of Contact Examination for Family Members:

Please complete a list of your family or household members (who have been in frequent and close contact with you) and return it to the nurses in the clinic. Nurses will assess the infectivity of your disease and the age of your close contacts to decide on the appropriate screening measures. Both tuberculin skin test and chest x-ray examination may be needed for some of them. For public health concern and the prevention of the spread of the disease, please urge as far as possible, your family members to undergo contact examination according to the following procedures.

- a. Contacts for tuberculin skin test (it is a skin test done by injection) should bring along the screening card issued by the clinic nurse and attend chest clinic for the test on the suggested date for testing. They need to return to the same clinic within 48 to 72 hours after the test for inspection of the injection site and assessment.
- b. Contacts for chest x-ray examination should bring along the green screening card and attend one of the chest clinics on Monday to Friday to have the chest x-ray examination.
- c. All family contacts requiring chest x-ray examination are advised to have the screening done as soon as possible. Nurses will contact those who do not turn up for the screening. For those contacts who have taken chest x-ray within the previous 6 months can bring along their x-ray reports for doctor's assessment.
- d. After chest x-ray examination, if there are significant findings requiring follow-up actions, nurses will call back the individual within two weeks. Those who are not notified by clinic staff within two weeks may assume that there are no significant

findings suggestive of TB in their chest x-rays. There is no need for them to trace their screening results from the clinic.

Full Time Chest Clinics	Tel. No.
Wanchai Chest Clinic 1/F, Wanchai Polyclinic, 99 Kennedy Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong	2591 1195
Sai Ying Pun Chest Clinic 2/F, Sai Ying Pun Jockey Club Polyclinic, 134 Queen's Road West, Hong Kong	2859 8227
Shaukeiwan Chest Clinic 2/F, Shaukeiwan Jockey Club Clinic, 8 Chai Wan Road, Hong Kong	2560 4522
Kowloon Chest Clinic G/F, 147A, Argyle Street, Kowloon	2711 2086
Yaumatei Chest Clinic 2/F, Yaumatei Jockey Club Polyclinic, 145 Battery Street, Kowloon	2388 5939
Shek Kip Mei Chest Clinic 1/F, Shek Kip Mei Health Centre, 2 Berwick Street, Kowloon	2777 4535
East Kowloon Chest Clinic G/F, East Kowloon Polyclinic, 160 Hammer Hill Road, Kowloon	2352 0077
Yung Fung Shee Chest Clinic 1/F, Yung Fung Shee Memorial Centre, 79 Cha Kwo Ling Road, Kowloon	2727 8250
Yan Oi Chest Clinic 2/F, Yan Oi Polyclinic, 6 Tuen Lee Street, Tuen Mun, New Territories	2404 3740
South Kwai Chung Chest Clinic G/F, 310 Kwai Shing Circuit, Kwai Chung, New Territories	2419 1721
Yuen Chau Kok Chest Clinic 1/F, 29 Chap Wai Kon Street, Sha Tin, New Territories	2647 6445
Tai Po Chest Clinic 1/F, Tai Po Jockey Club Clinic, 37 Ting Kok Road, Tai Po, New Territories	2689 5600

Part-time Chest Clinics	Tel. No.
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Sheung Shui Chest Clinic 1/F, Shek Wu Hui Jockey Club Clinic, 108 Jockey Club Road, Shek Wu Hui, Sheung Shui, New Territories	2670 0211 ext. 20
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Yuen Long Chest Clinic G/F, Yuen Long Jockey Club Health Centre, 269 Castle Peak Road, Yuen Long, New Territories	2443 8540
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Sai Kung Chest Clinic G/F, Mona Fong Clinic, 23 Man Nin Street, Sai Kung, New Territories	2792 2601
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Cheung Chau Chest Clinic G/F, St John Hospital, Cheung Chau Hospital Road, Tung Wan, Cheung Chau	2986 2201
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Tung Chung Chest Clinic 1/F, Tung Chung Health Centre, 6 Fu Tung Street, Tung Chung, Lantau Island	3575 8393
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For further enquiries, please contact the above chest clinics.

(Rev. 1/2020)