

## Remember:

- TB can result in death if not treated in a timely manner. Therefore, children should be taken to the local clinic to be screened for TB early.
- Every clinic in Zimbabwe can treat TB
- TB treatment is free
- TB is curable

Visit your nearest clinic or hospital to find out more information about TB in children



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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT TB IN CHILDREN (CHILDHOOD TB)



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## WHAT IS TB?

TB is a disease caused by mycobacterium tuberculosis bacteria. This bacteria usually affects lungs although other parts of the body can be affected such as the brain, heart and bones.

## CAN CHILDREN GET TB?

Yes, children can get TB. Children can easily contract TB from anyone infected with TB.

## HOW DO CHILDREN GET TB?

Through contact with anyone who has TB. Children often become infected from contact with a TB-infected person living in their household. When any TB-infected person sneezes, coughs, sings, or talks, TB bacilli is propelled into the air. A child breathing in the bacilli can become infected with TB.

## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF TB IN CHILDREN?

Signs and symptoms of TB in children can easily be confused with other diseases, and often overlooked. Should these symptoms persist after two weeks, even if the child has been given antibiotics, chances are the child has TB. Quickly take your child for TB screening at your nearest clinic. *It is free.*

### Symptoms include:

- A persistent cough that never goes away
- Failing to gain weight or weight loss
- Reduced playfulness and energy
- Feeling tired

- Fever
- Wheeze
- Swollen lymph nodes around neck

## WHICH CHILDREN ARE AT RISK OF GETTING TB?

All children are at risk of TB; but the disease progresses faster, and can be worse in children under age five. Risks increase when a child has been around someone who has/had TB, when a child is undernourished, when a child has had any recent infection, and when a child is living with HIV.

## IS MEDICINE AVAILABLE TO TREAT TB IN CHILDREN?

Yes. New child friendly flavoured formulations are now available to treat TB in children. The flavours are banana and strawberry to make it easier for children to consume the medicines.

Children are given medicines according to their weight. It is important that the child is weighed each time he/she is taken for review so that correct amounts of medicines are given.

## CAN TB BE CURED IN CHILDREN?

Yes. TB can be treated and cured in children.

## CAN A CHILD LIVE A NORMAL LIFE AFTER TB DIAGNOSIS?

Yes. When a child is diagnosed with TB and takes all medication without interruption, he/she will be cured and will be able to go on with his/her life as any other child

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHILD WHO IS BREASTFEEDING IS DIAGNOSED WITH TB?

The child should continue breastfeeding while receiving treatment for TB.

## CAN TB BE PREVENTED IN CHILDREN?

Yes:

- Every child should have a BCG vaccine at the time of birth
- Every child who has been in contact with a person with TB should receive TB Preventive Therapy (only after TB has been ruled out). Notifying a health clinician of possible contact as early as possible can help prevent active TB.
- Proper ventilation in homes, schools, and health facilities (opening windows and doors and ensuring fresh air) can also help prevent spread of TB to children.
- Ensuring your child is regularly screened for TB at routine wellness checks.

## HOW SHOULD CAREGIVERS SUPPORT CHILDREN WHO ARE INFECTED WITH TB?

By ensuring that children take their medication as prescribed and for the full length of time recommended

By providing nutritious meals to boost their immune system

By taking them to the clinic should they feel unwell while on treatment.