# COVID-19 & Tuberculosis

**Maryland**
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

The coronavirus (or COVID-19) pandemic has made the focus on tuberculosis (or TB) prevention/treatment more necessary and urgent in Maryland.

## What is COVID-19?

- COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by a virus that can spread from person-to-person.  This virus can cause severe disease and has resulted in millions of deaths worldwide.  There is no known cure for COVID-19.

## What is Tuberculosis or TB?

- TB is a serious & sometimes deadly respiratory illness (caused by a bacteria) that usually attacks the lungs, but can also affect other parts of the body.
- **There are two types of TB — latent TB infection & active TB disease.**
  - If you have **latent TB infection,** you can't spread it to others.  It can develop into **active TB disease**.
  - TB disease can be spread to others if not treated.
  - Both types of TB can be treated successfully.

### Shared Symptoms

- **BOTH COVID-19 & TB may cause:**
  - **cough**
  - **shortness of breath**
  - **fever**
  - **chills**

- **Spread when an infected person sneezes, coughs, etc.**

### Additional COVID-19 Symptoms

- Symptoms may develop **2-14 days after exposure.**

- Other symptoms:
  - new loss of taste or smell
  - sore throat and congestion/runny nose
  - nausea or vomiting
  - muscle or body aches
  - diarrhea

### Additional TB Disease Symptoms

- Symptoms may develop **after weeks to years later if not treated for latent TB infection.**

- Other symptoms:
  - night sweats and persistent chest pain
  - coughing up blood or phlegm
  - unexplained weight loss or fatigue

## Who is at High Risk for TB?

- People who have **lived in or visited another country** other than the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, or Western/Northern Europe.

- Those who have a **weakened immune system** (ex. HIV, organ transplant, cancer, diabetes, use of medications that affect the immune system, etc.).

- **Close contact** to someone who has TB disease.

- History of **homelessness/incarceration.**

## How to Protect You and Your Family

- If you're at a **high risk for TB ,** it's important to know your status & get treated if you have either latent or active TB.
  - Getting **sick with COVID-19 while you have TB** can lead to severe complications.
  - **Strictly follow your TB treatment** as directed by your healthcare provider.
- Practice COVID-19 precautions (social distancing & face coverings).
- Wash hands frequently & disinfect surfaces.
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
- **Call your healthcare provider** or **your local health department if** you have symptoms.
- Respond to contact tracing inquiries quickly.

## Where to Get Tested/More Information

- **COVID-19 Testing:** Call 211 or Visit https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/symptoms-testing#locator
  - **More  on COVID-19 in Maryland:** https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/
- **More on TB in Maryland:**
  - https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/oidpcs/ctbcp/pages/home.aspx