



**BC Centre for Disease Control  
Tuberculosis Control**

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# Tuberculosis of the Glands



BC Centre for Disease Control

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- Tuberculosis (TB) is caused by a germ called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (*M. tuberculosis* for short).
- Tuberculosis occurs when an individual gets infected by the *M. tuberculosis* germ.
- The infection usually occurs when a person breathes in the *M. tuberculosis* germ from another person.
- Not all people infected by the *M. tuberculosis* germ get the disease from the infection.
- When an infection with *M. tuberculosis* occurs most people do not realize it at the time.
- For many people no further problems occur but the *M. tuberculosis* germ can remain sleeping in the body and become active at a later time. There is no way of predicting what will happen in each individual.
- When the *M. tuberculosis* germ becomes active it can produce disease and poor health.

One of the most common places in the body that the *M. tuberculosis* germ becomes active is in the glands of the neck.

The glands become large and a lump in the neck can be felt. Sometimes the lump can be painful.

Other possible symptoms include:

- fever
- night sweats
- loss of appetite
- weight loss
- tired, fatigue

If you have disease just in the neck glands you will not infect others.

The disease is entirely curable if the medication is taken exactly as prescribed.

Once you are on treatment the glands should get smaller. However, in some people it takes a long time before the lumps decrease in size even though you are taking all of your pills.

Please let our staff know the change in size of these glands.

We judge response to treatment by the decrease in the size of the glands. In addition we look for the disappearance of other symptoms like fever, night sweats, loss of appetite and fatigue.

While you are on your medications we also monitor any side effects of the medications.