

Treatment of Tuberculosis Disease

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Quick Start Check List: Treatment of Tuberculosis Disease

This check list is designed to assist public health nurses when treating a patient for tuberculosis disease. Its high-level list of tasks provides an overview and to help staff know where to access important instructions and identify available forms. The tasks listed below should be performed by licensed nursing, medical, and laboratory staff. This check list requires understanding the instructions in the manual and familiarity with local protocols and standing orders. Required and recommended forms are available on the CDEpi Resource Page for Public Health. For more information, contact us at 406-444-0273.

Tasks for Diagnosis of Tuberculosis Disease	Instructions and Forms
Perform the initial assessment of the patient	Instructions: Section 9: Case Management Topics: Quick Start Check List, Initial Assessment
Evaluate the patient	Instructions: Section 5: Diagnosis of Tuberculosis Disease Topic: Quick Start Check List
Tasks for Treatment of Tuberculosis Disease	Instructions and Forms
Follow basic principles for tuberculosis (TB) disease	Instructions: Section 6: Treatment of Tuberculosis Disease Topic: Basic Treatment Principles
Plan and initiate treatment for TB disease: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Initiate medical treatment within 3 days of positive acid-fast bacilli (AFB) sputum smear results <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain baseline biochemistry tests for toxicity monitoring (choose tests based on regimen and for special situations such as human immunodeficiency virus [HIV] infection, history of liver disease, alcoholism, and pregnancy): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete blood count ▪ Platelets ▪ Liver function tests ▪ Uric acid measurements <input type="checkbox"/> Perform baseline visual acuity and color discrimination tests for toxicity monitoring if the patient is prescribed ethambutol <input type="checkbox"/> Assure that an appropriate treatment regimen, dosages, and duration are selected. The preferred regimen for treating TB disease consists of an initial 2-month phase of 4 drugs: isoniazid, rifampin, pyrazinamide, and ethambutol followed by a 4-month continuation phase of isoniazid and rifampin¹ 	Instructions: Section 6: Treatment of Tuberculosis Disease Topics: Treatment Regimens and Dosages (Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6); Treatment in Special Situations Section 9: Case Management Topic: Treatment Plan Recommended Forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ "Treatment Plan" ▪ "Bacteriology Data Sheet" ▪ "Biochemistry Data Sheet"

Tasks for Treatment of Tuberculosis Disease	Instructions and Forms
<p>Plan and initiate treatment for TB disease (continued):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assure that the following special situations are considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drug-resistant TB ▪ HIV infection ▪ Alcoholism ▪ Liver disease ▪ Renal insufficiency and end-stage renal disease ▪ TB associated with tumor necrosis factor-alpha antagonists ▪ Culture-negative pulmonary TB ▪ Extrapulmonary TB ▪ Pregnancy and breastfeeding ▪ TB in children <input type="checkbox"/> Assure that a written treatment plan is developed <input type="checkbox"/> Assure that the patient and provider are aware of and educated about the treatment plan <input type="checkbox"/> Begin implementing the treatment plan 	
<p>Monitor the patient regularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assess adherence and drug toxicity at each directly observed therapy (DOT) visit <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct ongoing assessment and monitoring at least monthly for clinical response, drug toxicity, and adherence <input type="checkbox"/> Reassess treatment and, if concerned about response or drug toxicity, consult with the treating physician. If a change is decided upon, obtain new physician's orders and order drugs <input type="checkbox"/> Receive and review drug susceptibility results 1 to 2 months after the patient's initial sputum collection date. Consult with the Montana TB Program and a medical expert if drug susceptibility results show drug resistance to first-line drugs 	
<p>Monitor the patient for drug toxicity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assess drug toxicity at each DOT visit <input type="checkbox"/> Repeat liver function tests (aspartate aminotransferase [AST], alanine aminotransferase [ALT], and serum bilirubin) when the patient is taking isoniazid, a rifamycin, or pyrazinamide if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Baseline results are abnormal ▪ The patient is pregnant, in the immediate postpartum period, or at high risk for adverse reactions ▪ The patient has symptoms of adverse reactions 	<p>Instructions:</p> <p>Section 6: Treatment of Tuberculosis Disease</p> <p>Topic: Side Effects and Adverse Reactions (Tables 7 and 8)</p> <p>Recommended Forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ "Treatment Plan" ▪ "Directly Observed Therapy Form 2 - Side Effects and Adverse Reactions" ▪ "Biochemistry Data Sheet" ▪ "Monthly TB Patient Assessment"

Tasks for Treatment of Tuberculosis Disease	Instructions and Forms
<p>Monitor the patient for drug toxicity (continued):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ If the patient is taking ethambutol, question the patient monthly regarding possible visual disturbances, including blurred vision or scotomata □ Test visual acuity and color discrimination monthly when the patient is taking ethambutol <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In doses >15–25 mg/kg ▪ For >2 months ▪ With renal insufficiency 	
<p>Assess the patient's response to treatment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Call the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275 to determine how to monitor when the patient <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is culture negative, or ▪ Has AFB 3+ or 4+ results and/or cavitation on chest radiograph, or ▪ Has no sputum specimens collected □ If the patient initially had positive AFB sputum smear results quantified as 1+ to 2+, then each week collect sputum specimens and submit them for testing until 3 consecutive negative AFB sputum smear results are reported □ When the patient has negative AFB sputum smear results, then each month collect sputum specimens and submit them for testing until 2 consecutive negative culture results are reported <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) patients, monthly sputum specimens are required ▪ For non-MDR-TB patients who can produce sputum, monthly specimens are recommended □ If sputum smear results are positive after 2 months of treatment, call the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275 □ Take the following actions if cultures or smears remain positive and symptoms continue after 3 months of treatment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consult with the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275 ▪ Evaluate the patient for drug-resistant TB ▪ Provide DOT if the patient is self-administering medication 	<p>Instructions:</p> <p>Section 6: Treatment of Tuberculosis Disease Topic: Response to Treatment</p> <p>Recommended Forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ "Treatment Plan" ▪ "Monthly TB Patient Assessment" ▪ "Directly Observed Therapy Form 1 - Treatment Record" ▪ "Bacteriology Data Sheet" ▪ "Biochemistry Data Sheet"

Tasks for Treatment of Tuberculosis Disease	Instructions and Forms
<p>Confirm the completion of treatment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Verify completion of treatment 6 to 9 months after treatment was started depending upon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regimen ▪ Adherence ▪ Response to treatment ▪ Number of weeks on DOT ▪ Number of doses taken □ If treatment is not completed within the recommended time frame, contact the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275 and assess the patient with a physician to determine continuation of longer therapy 	<p>Instructions:</p> <p>Section 9: Case Management Topic: Completion of Therapy</p> <p>Section 6: Treatment of Tuberculosis Disease Topics: Completion of Therapy, Regimens (Table 3)</p> <p>Recommended Forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ "Treatment Plan" ▪ "Monthly TB Patient Assessment" ▪ "Directly Observed Therapy Form 1 - Treatment Record" ▪ "Bacteriology Data Sheet"

Introduction

Purpose

The overall goals for treatment of tuberculosis (TB) are to cure the patient and to minimize the transmission of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* to others. Successful treatment of TB has benefits both for the individual patient and the community in which the patient resides.

Use this section to understand and follow national and Montana guidelines to

- follow basic treatment principles for TB disease;
- select appropriate treatment regimens, dosages, and duration;
- monitor patients for side effects and adverse reactions;
- assess patients' response to treatment;
- determine completion of therapy;
- determine the need for post-treatment evaluation;
- provide treatment in special situations, such as when a patient has drug-resistant TB or TB–human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) coinfection; and
- hospitalize and coordinate hospital discharges of patients with infectious TB.

In the 2005 “Controlling Tuberculosis in the United States: Recommendations from the American Thoracic Society, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Infectious Diseases Society of America,” one of the recommended strategies to achieve the goal of reduction of TB morbidity and mortality is the early and accurate detection, diagnosis, and reporting of TB cases, leading to initiation and completion of treatment.²

Forms



Required and recommended forms are available on the CDEpi Resource Page for Public Health. For more information on these forms, contact us at 406-444-0273..

Basic Treatment Principles

Follow the basic treatment principles for tuberculosis (TB) disease, as outlined below in Table 1.

TABLE 1: BASIC TREATMENT PRINCIPLES FOR TUBERCULOSIS DISEASE

Phase	Principles
At Start of Treatment	Patient-centered care and directly observed therapy (DOT). An adherence plan should tailor treatment and supervision to each patient by considering his or her clinical and social circumstances (patient-centered care), as well as emphasizing DOT.
	Cultural competence. It is imperative to become culturally competent and guide other healthcare providers toward culturally competent healthcare. A culturally competent system acknowledges cultural differences regarding healthcare and incorporates them into all levels of the healthcare delivery system, from policy to provider to patient.
	Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) testing. HIV testing should be offered to all patients with TB disease.
	Medical supervision. Patients with confirmed or suspected tuberculosis (TB) disease must be under the medical supervision of a provider who is licensed in the State of Montana as a medical physician.
	Prompt start. Start patients with confirmed or suspected TB disease promptly on appropriate treatment. It is not necessary to wait for laboratory confirmation.
Regimen During Treatment	Multiple drugs. Treatment regimens must contain multiple drugs to which the organism is susceptible. The administration of a single drug or the addition of a single drug to a failing regimen can lead to the development of resistance.
	Single doses. TB medications should be administered together as a single dose rather than in divided doses. A single dose leads to higher, and potentially more effective, peak serum concentrations, and facilitates DOT. Although ingesting the medications with food will delay or moderately decrease the absorption of the medications, the effects are of little clinical significance.
	Pyridoxine to prevent neuropathy. Pyridoxine (Vitamin B-6, 25 mg) is recommended for some individuals receiving isoniazid (INH) as part of their treatment regimen to prevent peripheral neuropathy. It should be used in persons at risk for neuropathy (women who are pregnant or breastfeeding or persons with nutritional deficiency, diabetes, HIV infection, renal failure, or alcoholism).

Phase	Principles
<p>Persistent Positive Cultures</p>	<p>Evaluation when positive cultures persist. Monitor for culture conversion and promptly evaluate patients with persistently positive cultures after 3 months of therapy to identify the cause. Treatment failure is defined as continued or recurrent positive cultures after 4 months of treatment.</p>
<p>At Completion of Treatment</p>	<p>Completion in terms of the number of doses. The criteria for treatment completion are based upon the total number of doses taken and not solely on the duration of therapy.</p>

Treatment Regimens and Dosages

Use this information to:

- identify the appropriate regimen;
- determine the appropriate dosage for each drug; and
- determine the duration of treatment.

The information in this topic was provided using guidelines for treating tuberculosis (TB) that have been developed by the American Thoracic Society (ATS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA).



See the “Treatment in Special Situations” topic in this section for information on treatment when there is drug-resistant TB, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection, liver disease, or renal disease; when the patient is taking tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF- α) antagonists; where there is culture-negative TB or extrapulmonary TB; when the patient is pregnant or breastfeeding; or when the patient is considered to be of pediatric age.

As you use this section, remember the abbreviations for first-line drugs, which are listed below.

TABLE 2: ABBREVIATIONS FOR FIRST-LINE DRUGS

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Ethambutol: EMB▪ Isoniazid: INH▪ Pyrazinamide: PZA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Rifabutin: RFB▪ Rifampin: RIF▪ Rifapentine: RPT
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Regimens

Identify the appropriate regimen for the patient. There are four basic regimens recommended for treating adults with TB caused by organisms that are known or presumed to be susceptible to isoniazid (INH), rifampin (RIF), pyrazinamide (PZA), and ethambutol (EMB). Children, depending on the circumstances, may not receive EMB in the initial phase of a six-month regimen, but the regimens are otherwise identical.

The preferred regimen for treating TB disease consists of an initial two-month phase of four drugs: INH, RIF, PZA, and EMB followed by a four-month continuation phase of INH and RIF.³

Each regimen has an initial phase of two months, followed by a choice of several options for a continuation phase of either four or seven months. In Table 3: **Drug Regimens for Culture-Positive Pulmonary Tuberculosis Caused by Drug-Susceptible Organisms**, the initial phase is denoted by a number (1, 2, 3, or 4), and the options for

the continuation phase are denoted by the respective number and a letter designation (a, b, or c).

Directly observed therapy (DOT) is the preferred initial management strategy for all regimens and should be used whenever feasible. All patients being given drugs less than seven days per week (five, three, or two days per week) must receive DOT.

The recommended regimens, and the number of doses specified by each regimen, are described on the next page in Table 3.



For consultation regarding the treatment of TB, contact the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275.

TABLE 3: DRUG REGIMENS FOR CULTURE-POSITIVE PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS CAUSED BY DRUG-SUSCEPTIBLE ORGANISMS⁴

Initial Phase			Continuation Phase			Range of total doses (minimal duration)	Rating* (evidence) [†]	
Regimen	Drugs	Interval and doses [‡] (minimal duration)	Regimen	Drugs	Interval and doses ^{‡ §} (minimal duration)		HIV-	HIV+
1	INH RIF PZA EMB	Seven days/week for 56 doses (8 wk) or 5 d/wk for 40 doses (8 wk) [¶]	1a	INH RIF	Seven days/week for 126 doses (18 wk) or 5 d/wk for 90 doses (18 wk) [¶]	182–130 (26 wk)	A (I)	A (II)
			1b	INH RIF	Twice weekly for 36 doses (18 wk)	92–76 (26 wk)	A (I)	A (II) [#]
			1c**	INH RPT	Once weekly for 18 doses (18 wk)	74–58 (26 wk)	B (I)	E (I)
2	INH RIF PZA EMB	Seven days/week for 14 doses (2 wk), then twice weekly for 12 doses (6 wk) or 5 d/wk for 10 doses (2 wk), [¶] then twice weekly for 12 doses (6 wk)	2a	INH RIF	Twice weekly for 36 doses (18 wk)	62–58 (26 wk)	A (II)	B (II) [#]
			2b**	INH RPT	Once weekly for 18 doses (18 wk)	44–40 (26 wk)	B (I)	E (I)
3	INH RIF PZA EMB	Three times weekly for 24 doses (8 wk)	3a	INH RIF	Three times weekly for 54 doses (18 wk)	78 (26 wk)	B (I)	B (II)
4	INH RIF EMB	Seven days/week for 56 doses (8 wk) or 5 d/wk for 40 doses (8 wk) [¶]	4a	INH RIF	Seven days/week for 217 doses (31 wk) or 5 d/wk for 155 doses (31 wk) [¶]	273–195 (39 wk)	C (I)	C (II)
			4b	INH RIF	Twice weekly for 62 doses (31 wk)	118–102 (39 wk)	C (I)	C (II)

Definitions of abbreviations: DOT = directly observed therapy; EMB = ethambutol; INH = isoniazid; HIV = human immunodeficiency virus; PZA = pyrazinamide; RIF = rifampin; RPT = rifapentine.

* Definitions of evidence ratings: A = preferred; B = acceptable alternative; C = offer when A and B cannot be given; D = should generally not be offered; E = should never be given.

† Definition of evidence ratings: I = randomized clinical trial; II = data from clinical trials that were not randomized or were conducted in other populations; III = expert opinion.

‡ When DOT is used, drugs may be given 5 days/week and the necessary number of doses adjusted accordingly. Although there are no studies that compare 5 with 7 daily doses, extensive experience indicates this would be an effective practice.

§ Patients with cavitation on initial chest radiograph and positive cultures at completion of 2 months of therapy should receive a 7-month (31 week; either 217 doses [daily] or 62 doses [twice weekly]) continuation phase.

¶ Five-day-a-week administration is always given by DOT. Rating for 5 day/week regimens is rated AIII.

Not recommended for HIV-infected patients with CD4+ cell counts <100 cells/microliter.

** Options 1c and 2b should be used only in HIV-negative patients who have negative sputum smears at the time of completion of 2 months of therapy and who do not have cavitation on initial chest radiograph. For patients started on this regimen and found to have a positive culture from the 2-month specimen, treatment should be extended an extra 3 months.

Source: ATS, CDC, IDSA. Treatment of tuberculosis. *MMWR* 2003;52(No. RR-11):3.

Dosages



For consultation regarding the treatment of TB, contact the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275.

TABLE 4: DOSES*OF FIRST-LINE ANTITUBERCULOSIS DRUGS FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN† 5

Drug	Preparation	Adults/children	Doses			
			Daily	1x/wk	2x/wk	3x/wk
INH	Tablets (50 mg, 100 mg, 300 mg); elixir (50 mg/5 ml); aqueous solution (100 mg/ml) for intramuscular injection [¶]	Adults (max.)	5 mg/kg (300 mg)	15 mg/kg (900 mg)	15 mg/kg (900 mg)	15 mg/kg (900 mg)
		Children (max.)	10–15 mg/kg (300 mg)	—	20–30 mg/kg (900 mg)	—
RIF	Capsule (150 mg, 300 mg); powder may be suspended for oral administration; aqueous solution for intravenous injection	Adults [‡] (max.)	10 mg/kg (600 mg)	—	10 mg/kg (600 mg)	10 mg/kg (600 mg)
		Children (max.)	10–20 mg/kg (600 mg)	—	10–20 mg/kg (600 mg)	—

Drug	Preparation	Adults/children	Doses			
			Daily	1x/wk	2x/wk	3x/wk
RFB	Capsule (150 mg)	Adults [†] (max.)	5 mg/kg (300 mg)	—	5 mg/kg (300 mg)	5 mg/kg (300 mg)
		Children	Appropriate dosing for children is unknown			
RPT	Tablet (150 mg, film coated)	Adults	—	10 mg/kg (continuation phase) (600 mg)	—	—
		Children	This drug is not approved for use in children	This drug is not approved for use in children	This drug is not approved for use in children	This drug is not approved for use in children
PZA	Tablet (500 mg, scored)	Adults	See Table 5	—	See Table 5	See Table 5
		Children (max.)	15–30 mg/kg (2.0 g)	—	50 mg/kg (2.0 g)	—
EMB	Tablet (100 mg, 400 mg)	Adults	See Table 6	—	See Table 6	See Table 6
		Children [§] (max.)	15–20 mg/kg daily (1.0 g)	—	50 mg/kg (2.5 g)	—

Definitions of abbreviations: EMB = ethambutol; FDA = Food and Drug Administration; INH = isoniazid; PZA = pyrazinamide; RFB = rifabutin; RIF = rifampin; RPT = rifapentine.

* Dose per weight is based on ideal body weight. Children weighing more than 40 kg should be dosed as adults.

† For the purposes of this document, adult dosing begins at the age of 15 years.

¶ INH is used, but not FDA-approved, for intravenous administration. For intravenous use of INH, please consult with the Montana Tuberculosis Program at 406-444-0275.

‡ Dose may need to be adjusted when there is concomitant use of protease inhibitors or nonnucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors.

§ The drug can likely be used safely in older children but should be used with caution in children less than 5 years of age, in whom visual acuity cannot be monitored. In younger children, EMB at the dose of 15 mg/kg per day can be used if there is suspected or proven resistance to INH or RIF.

Source: ATS, CDC, IDSA. Treatment of tuberculosis. *MMWR* 2003;52(No. RR-11):4.

TABLE 5: SUGGESTED PYRAZINAMIDE DOSES, USING WHOLE TABLETS, FOR ADULTS WEIGHING 40 TO 90 KILOGRAMS⁶

Interval	Weight (kg) [*]		
	40–55 kg	56–75 kg	76–90 kg
Daily, mg (mg/kg)	1,000 (18.2–25.0)	1,500 (20.0–26.8)	2,000 † (22.2–26.3)
Thrice weekly, mg (mg/kg)	1,500 (27.3–37.5)	2,500 (33.3–44.6)	3,000 † (33.3–39.5)
Twice weekly, mg (mg/kg)	2,000 (36.4–50.0)	3,000 (40.0–53.6)	4,000 † (44.4–52.6)
<p>* Based on estimated lean body weight. † Maximum dose regardless of weight.</p>			

Source: ATS, CDC, IDSA. Treatment of tuberculosis. *MMWR* 2003;52(No. RR-11):5.

TABLE 6: SUGGESTED ETHAMBUTOL DOSES, USING WHOLE TABLETS, FOR ADULTS WEIGHING 40 TO 90 KILOGRAMS⁷

Interval	Weight (kg) [*]		
	40–55 kg	56–75 kg	76–90 kg
Daily, mg (mg/kg)	800 (14.5–20.0)	1,200 (16.0–21.4)	1,600 † (17.8–21.1)
Thrice weekly, mg (mg/kg)	1,200 (21.8–30.0)	2,000 (26.7–35.7)	2,400 † (26.7–31.6)
Twice weekly, mg (mg/kg)	2,000 (36.4–50.0)	2,800 (37.3–50.0)	4,000 † (44.4–52.6)
<p>* Based on estimated lean body weight. † Maximum dose regardless of weight.</p>			

Source: ATS, CDC, IDSA. Treatment of tuberculosis. *MMWR* 2003;52(No. RR-11):5.

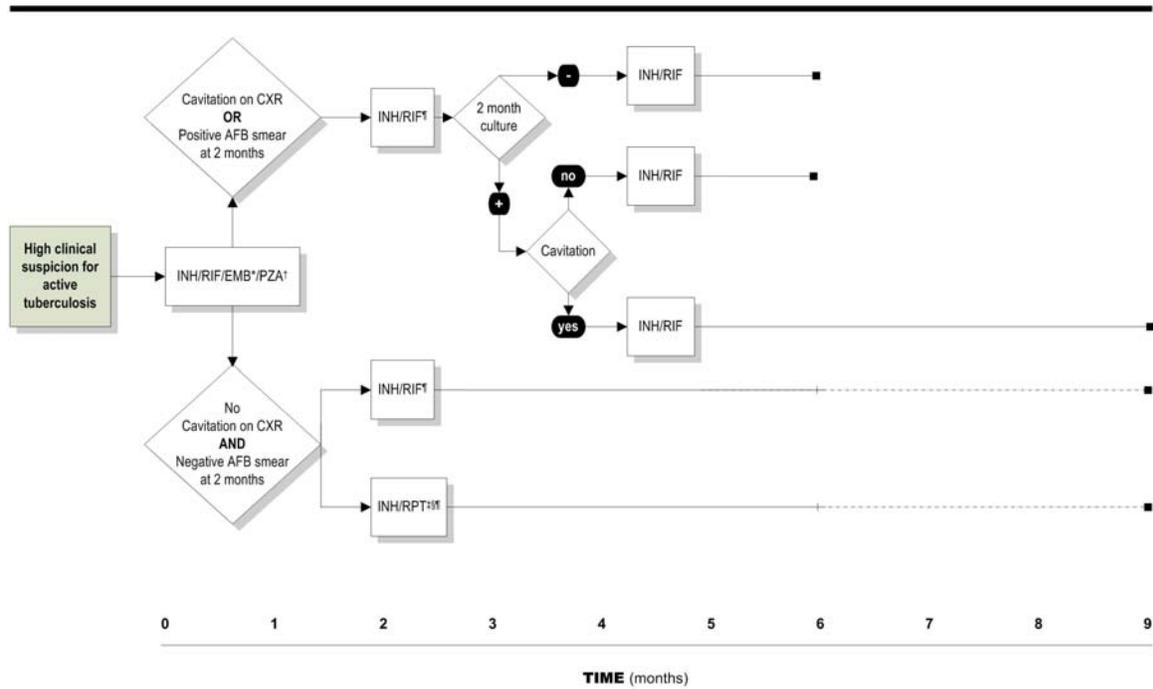
Duration of Treatment

Use the treatment algorithm in Figure 1: **Treatment Algorithm for Tuberculosis** to determine the duration of treatment. The four recommended regimens for treating patients with TB caused by drug-susceptible organisms have a duration of six to nine months. Each regimen has an initial phase of two months, followed by a continuation phase of either four or seven months.

Figure 1 gives directions for treating patients with pulmonary and extrapulmonary TB. The standard duration of treatment for pulmonary TB should be six months unless **both** cavitation is present **and** the patient is still culture positive after two months, in which case nine months is recommended. Note that there are three exceptions to the standard six-month duration of treatment.

1. For tuberculous meningitis, the optimal length of therapy has not been established, although some experts recommend 9 to 12 months.⁸
2. Treatment for bone or joint TB may need to extend to nine months.⁹
3. In HIV-negative, culture-negative patients, treatment for four months may be adequate if there is clinical or radiographic improvement and no other etiology identified.¹⁰ However, HIV-infected patients with culture-negative pulmonary TB should be treated for a minimum of six months.¹¹

FIGURE 1. TREATMENT ALGORITHM FOR TUBERCULOSIS¹²



Definition of abbreviations: AFB = acid-fast bacilli; CXR = chest radiograph; EMB = ethambutol; HIV = human immunodeficiency virus; INH = isoniazid; PZA = pyrazinamide; RIF = rifampin; RPT = rifapentine.

* EMB may be discontinued when results of drug susceptibility testing indicate no drug resistance.

† PZA may be discontinued after it has been taken for 2 months (56 doses).

‡ RPT should not be used in HIV-infected patients with TB or in patients with extrapulmonary TB.

§ Therapy should be extended to 9 months if 2-month culture is positive.

¶ At 2 months, review drug susceptibility and culture results, if applicable, and review these results regularly throughout treatment if the patient is drug resistant.

Source: ATS, CDC, IDSA. Treatment of tuberculosis. *MMWR* 2003;52(No. RR-11):6.

Side Effects and Adverse Reactions

The patient should be monitored by a registered nurse and/or clinician or case manager at least monthly for signs and symptoms of adverse reactions until treatment is completed. If a patient is symptomatic, the provider should be consulted and the patient monitored more frequently. Chemistries and complete blood count (CBC), aspartate aminotransferase (AST)/alanine aminotransferase (ALT), or other tests based on specific drugs should be done periodically. See Table 8: **Monitoring and Interventions for Side Effects and Adverse Reactions** in this section.

As is true with all medications, combination chemotherapy for tuberculosis is associated with a predictable incidence of adverse effects, some mild, some serious.¹³

Adverse effects are fairly common and often manageable. Although it is important to be attuned to the potential for adverse effects, it is at least equally important that first-line drugs not be stopped without adequate justification.¹⁴ However, adverse reactions can be severe, and thus, it is important to recognize adverse reactions that indicate when a drug should not be used. Mild adverse effects can generally be managed with symptomatic therapy; whereas with more severe effects, the offending drug or drugs must be discontinued.¹⁵ In addition, proper management of more serious adverse reactions often requires expert consultation.¹⁶

Monitor patients for side effects and adverse reactions following the basic monitoring steps listed below.

Basic Monitoring Steps

1. All healthcare workers providing treatment for TB disease should be familiar with the American Thoracic Society (ATS)/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines.
 - a. All jurisdictions should follow the national monitoring guidelines identified in the current guidelines for treatment of TB, "Treatment of Tuberculosis" (*MMWR* 2003;52[No. RR-11]).
 - b. It is also important to check for guideline updates posted on the CDC's Division of Tuberculosis Elimination home page and the list of guidelines by date.
2. While on treatment, all patients should be evaluated in person, at baseline (before starting treatment) and then at least monthly for side effects and adverse reactions.

3. The common side effects of and adverse reactions to drugs used to treat for TB disease are listed in Table 7: **Reporting Reactions to Antituberculosis Medications**. Educate patients to stop the medicine and promptly report any of the symptoms or signs listed in Table 7 or any unexplained illness to the prescribing clinic immediately.
 - a. If a patient reports a potentially serious adverse reaction, call the patient's provider immediately and alert the state TB program by calling the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275.
 - b. If a patient reports a potentially less severe side effect, call the patient's provider immediately and monitor the patient.
4. If you suspect that an antituberculosis drug may be causing a particular side effect or adverse reaction:
 - a. Refer to Table 8: **Monitoring and Interventions for Side Effects and Adverse Reactions**.
 - b. Consult with the state TB program by calling the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275.
5. If you suspect that an antituberculosis drug may be interacting with other medications that the patient is taking, refer to pages 45–47 in the "Treatment of Tuberculosis" (*MMWR* 2003;52[No. RR-11]).
6. Document the following patient information:
 - a. Review of symptoms, side effects, and adverse reactions (and any labs that were drawn)
 - b. Education given
 - c. Refill provided
 - d. Description of any problems encountered and action taken for that visit
 - e. Next appointment

Reporting Reactions

The table below is intended for use by a healthcare worker who performs case management services. The healthcare worker should instruct the patient to report to the provider the side effects and adverse reactions listed in Table 7.

If a patient reports to a healthcare worker a potentially serious adverse reaction, the healthcare worker should call the patient's provider immediately and alert the Montana TB program by calling 406-444-0275.

If a patient reports to a healthcare worker a potentially less severe side effect, the healthcare worker should call the patient's provider immediately and monitor the patient.

TABLE 7: REPORTING REACTIONS TO ANTITUBERCULOSIS MEDICATIONS¹⁷

Potentially Serious Adverse Reactions*	Less Severe Signs and Symptoms*
<p>Immediately report the following signs and symptoms or other abnormalities or unexpected events to the patient's provider. These signs and symptoms suggest side effects, including hepatotoxicity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jaundice ▪ Dark urine ▪ Vomiting ▪ Abdominal pain ▪ Fever ▪ Visual changes ▪ Marked clinical rash <p>In consultation with the provider, instruct the patient to stop TB medications until evaluated by the provider.</p>	<p>Report the following signs and symptoms to the patient's provider within 24 hours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anorexia ▪ Nausea ▪ Malaise ▪ Peripheral neuropathy: tingling or burning sensation in hands or feet ▪ Rashes
<p>* These lists are not all-inclusive. Second-line drugs are not included. For a complete list, refer to the current guidelines for treatment of TB, "Treatment of Tuberculosis" (<i>MMWR</i> 2003;52[No. RR-11]).</p>	

Source: California Department of Health Services (CDHS)/California Tuberculosis Controllers Association (CTCA). TB case management—core components. *CDHS/CTCA Joint Guidelines* [CTCA Web site]. May 11, 1998:9. Accessed July 11, 2006.

Monitoring for Side Effects and Adverse Reactions by Antituberculosis Drug

Refer to Table 8: **Monitoring and Interventions for Side Effects and Adverse Reactions** to

- identify the side effects and adverse reactions associated with particular antituberculosis drugs
- determine how to monitor for side effects and adverse reactions

TABLE 8: MONITORING AND INTERVENTIONS FOR SIDE EFFECTS AND ADVERSE REACTIONS^{18,19,20}

Anti-tuberculosis Drug	Side Effects/ Adverse Reactions	Monitoring	Comments
Isoniazid (INH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rash ▪ Hepatic enzyme elevation ▪ Hepatitis ▪ Peripheral neuropathy ▪ Mild central nervous system effects 	<p>Clinical monitoring monthly</p> <p>Liver function tests (aspartate aminotransferase [AST], alanine aminotransferase [ALT], and serum bilirubin) at baseline in selected cases ((human immunodeficiency virus [HIV] infection, history of liver disease, alcoholism, and pregnancy)</p> <p>Repeat measurements if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Baseline results are abnormal ▪ Patient is pregnant, in the immediate postpartum period, or at high risk for adverse reactions ▪ Patient has symptoms of adverse reactions 	<p>Hepatitis risk increases with age and alcohol consumption.</p> <p>Pyridoxine (vitamin B6, 10–25 mg/d) might prevent peripheral neuropathy and central nervous system effects.</p> <p>Serum concentrations of phenytoin, disulfiram (Antabuse), and carbamazepine may be increased in persons taking INH. Measure serum concentrations of phenytoin and carbamazepine in patients receiving INH (with or without rifampin), and adjust the dose if necessary.</p>

Anti-tuberculosis Drug	Side Effects/ Adverse Reactions	Monitoring	Comments
Rifampin (RIF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rash ▪ Gastrointestinal upset ▪ Hepatitis ▪ Fever ▪ Bleeding problems ▪ Thrombocytopenia ▪ Renal failure ▪ Flu-like symptoms ▪ Orange-colored body fluids (secretions, urine, tears) 	<p>Complete blood count, platelets, and liver function tests (aspartate aminotransferase [AST], alanine aminotransferase [ALT], and serum bilirubin) at baseline in selected cases (human immunodeficiency virus [HIV] infection, history of liver disease, alcoholism, and pregnancy)</p> <p>Repeat measurements if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Baseline results are abnormal ▪ Patient has symptoms of adverse reactions 	<p>There are a number of drug interactions with potentially serious consequences. Significant interactions with methadone, birth control hormones, and many other drugs.</p> <p>Contraindicated or should be used with caution when administered with protease inhibitors (PIs) and nonnucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NNRTIs). Reduces levels of many drugs (e.g., PIs, NNRTIs, methadone, dapsone, ketoconazole, coumadin derivatives, hormonal contraceptive, digitalis, sulfonyleureas, diazepam, β-blockers, anticonvulsants, and theophylline).</p> <p>For more information, refer to "Section 7: Drug Interactions" on page 45 in "Treatment of Tuberculosis" .</p> <p>Because information regarding rifamycin drug interactions is evolving rapidly, consult the CDC's Division of Tuberculosis "News and Updates" Web page to obtain the most up-to-date information.</p> <p>Colors body fluids orange.</p> <p>May permanently discolor soft contact lenses.</p>

Anti-tuberculosis Drug	Side Effects/ Adverse Reactions	Monitoring	Comments
Rifabutin (RFB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rash ▪ Hepatitis ▪ Fever ▪ Thrombocytopenia ▪ Orange-colored body fluids (secretions, urine, tears) <p>With increased levels of RFB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Severe arthralgias ▪ Uveitis ▪ Leukopenia 	<p>Complete blood count, platelets, and liver function tests (aspartate aminotransferase [AST], alanine aminotransferase [ALT], and serum bilirubin) at baseline in selected cases (human immunodeficiency virus [HIV] infection, history of liver disease, alcoholism, and pregnancy)</p> <p>Repeat measurements if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Baseline results are abnormal ▪ Patient has symptoms of adverse reactions <p>Use adjusted daily dose of RFB and monitor for decreased antiretroviral activity and for RFB toxicity if RFB taken concurrently with protease inhibitors (PIs) or nonnucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NNRTIs)</p>	<p>Although drug interactions are less problematic with RFB, they still occur and close monitoring is required.</p> <p>Contraindicated for HIV-infected patients taking hard-gel saquinavir or delavirdine; caution is also advised if RFB is administered with soft-gel saquinavir.</p> <p>Similar to rifampin but less potent of an inducer, rifabutin reduces levels of many drugs (e.g., PIs, NNRTIs, methadone, dapsone, ketoconazole, coumadin derivatives, hormonal contraceptive, digitalis, sulfonylureas, diazepam, β-blockers, anticonvulsants, and theophylline).</p> <p>When used with efavirenz, the daily dose of RFB should be increased from 300 mg to 450 mg or 600 mg.</p> <p>May permanently discolor soft contact lenses.</p>

Anti-tuberculosis Drug	Side Effects/ Adverse Reactions	Monitoring	Comments
Rifapentine (RPT)	Similar to those associated with rifampin	Similar to that for rifampin	Drug interactions involving RPT are being investigated and are likely to be similar to those of rifampin. RPT is an inducer of multiple hepatic enzymes and therefore may increase metabolism of coadministered drugs that are metabolized by these enzymes. For more information, refer to "Section 7: Drug Interactions" on page 45 in "Treatment of Tuberculosis".

Anti-tuberculosis Drug	Side Effects/ Adverse Reactions	Monitoring	Comments
<p>Pyrazinamide (PZA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gastrointestinal upset ▪ Hepatitis ▪ Rash ▪ Photosensitive dermatitis ▪ Hyperuricemia ▪ Joint aches ▪ Gout (rare) 	<p>Clinical monitoring at weeks 2, 4, and 8</p> <p>If the drug is used in patients with underlying liver disease, laboratory and clinical monitoring should be increased</p> <p>Baseline measurements of uric acid</p> <p>Liver function tests (aspartate aminotransferase [AST], alanine aminotransferase [ALT], and serum bilirubin) at baseline in selected cases (human immunodeficiency virus [HIV] infection, history of liver disease, alcoholism, or pregnancy)</p> <p>Repeat measurements if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Baseline results are abnormal ▪ Patient has symptoms of adverse reactions 	<p>Treat hyperuricemia only if patient has symptoms.</p> <p>Might make glucose control more difficult in persons with diabetes.</p> <p>Serum uric acid measurements are not recommended as a routine but may serve as a surrogate marker for compliance.</p>

Anti-tuberculosis Drug	Side Effects/ Adverse Reactions	Monitoring	Comments
Ethambutol (EMB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Optic neuritis ▪ Rash 	<p>Baseline tests of visual acuity (Snellen chart) and color discrimination (Ishihara tests)</p> <p>At each monthly visit, patients should be questioned regarding possible visual disturbances, including blurred vision or scotomata</p> <p>Monthly testing of visual acuity and color discrimination is recommended for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Patients taking doses >15–25 mg/kg ▪ Patients receiving EMB for >2 months ▪ Patients with renal insufficiency 	<p>Optic neuritis may be unilateral; check each eye separately.</p> <p>Patients should be instructed to contact their physician or public health clinic immediately if they experience a change in vision.</p> <p>EMB should be discontinued immediately and permanently if there are any signs of visual toxicity.</p>
Rifamate® (INH and RIF) Rifater® (INH, RIF, PZA)	See comments under individual drugs above		
<p>Definitions of abbreviations: ALT = alanine aminotransferase; AST = aspartate aminotransferase; EMB = ethambutol; HIV = human immunodeficiency virus; INH = isoniazid; NNRTIs = nonnucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors; PZA = pyrazinamide; PIs = protease inhibitors; RFB = rifabutin; RIF = rifampin; RPT = rifapentine.</p>			

Sources: CDC. Targeted tuberculin testing and treatment of latent tuberculosis infection. *MMWR* 2000;49 (No. RR-6):26–29, 38–39; ATS, CDC, IDSA. Treatment of tuberculosis. *MMWR* 2003;52(No. RR-11):19–25; CDC. Update: Adverse event data and revised American Thoracic Society/CDC recommendations against the use of rifampin and pyrazinamide for treatment of latent tuberculosis infection—United States. *MMWR* 2003;52(No. 31):735–736; CDC. Table 5: first-line anti-TB medications. In: Chapter 7: treatment of TB disease. *Core Curriculum on Tuberculosis (2000)* [Division of Tuberculosis Elimination Web site]. Updated November 2001. November 2001. Accessed July 3, 2006.

Response to Treatment



For consultation regarding a patient's response to treatment, contact the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275.

For patients whose sputum cultures are positive before treatment, the best way to measure the effectiveness of therapy is to obtain specimens for culture at least monthly until the cultures convert to negative. Patients with multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) should have cultures performed monthly for the entire course of treatment.

In some cases, a patient may not be able to produce a sputum specimen after two months of treatment. If the patient has improved clinically and has shown chest radiograph improvement, treatment may be continued as if the patient had a negative sputum specimen at two months.

Radiographic evaluations during treatment are of less importance than sputum evaluation. However, a chest radiograph at completion of treatment provides a baseline for comparison with future films.

Patients whose cultures have not become negative or whose symptoms do not resolve despite three months of therapy should be reevaluated for potential drug-resistant disease, as well as for potential failure to adhere to the regimen. If the patient is receiving self-administered therapy, the remainder of treatment should be directly observed.



If drug susceptibility results show resistance to any of the first-line drugs or if the patient remains symptomatic or smear- or culture-positive after three months, a tuberculosis (TB) medical expert should be consulted. Contact the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275 immediately.

In patients with negative sputum cultures before treatment, the major indicators of response to therapy are the chest radiograph and clinical evaluation. The intervals at which chest radiography should be repeated depend on the clinical circumstances and the differential diagnosis that is being considered, but usually should be no more than every three months. If the radiograph does not improve after the patient has received three months of treatment, the abnormality may be the result of either previous (not current) TB or another process.²¹

Completion of Therapy

A full course of therapy (completion of treatment) is determined more accurately if the total number of doses ingested is taken into account, as well as the duration of therapy. If there are no interruptions in drug administration, six months is usually the minimum duration of treatment and accurately indicates the amount of time in which drugs are given. However, in human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)-negative, culture-negative patients, treatment for four months may be adequate if there is clinical or radiographic improvement and no other etiology identified.²²



For consultation regarding the treatment of tuberculosis (TB) in a patient with negative cultures, contact the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275.

In some cases, either because of drug toxicity or nonadherence to the treatment regimen, the specified number of doses cannot be administered within the targeted period. In such cases, the goal is to deliver the specified number of doses within a recommended maximum time. For example, for a six-month daily regimen, the total doses should be administered within nine months of beginning treatment. If treatment is not completed within this period, the patient should be assessed to determine the appropriate action to take, such as continuing treatment for a longer duration or restarting treatment from the beginning.



Treating a patient for a defined duration, without accounting for the number of doses taken, can result in undertreatment.

Interruptions in treatment may have a significant effect on the duration of therapy. Reinstitution of treatment must take into account the extensiveness of the disease (e.g., cavitory versus noncavitory disease on chest radiograph, smears and cultures, immunologic status), the point in time when the interruption occurred, and the duration of the interruption. In general, the earlier in treatment and the longer the duration of the interruption, the more serious the effect and the greater the need to restart therapy from the beginning.²³



For consultation regarding completion of therapy or considerations for retreatment, contact the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275.

Post-Treatment Evaluation

Routine follow-up after completion of therapy is not necessary for patients with a satisfactory and prompt bacteriologic response to a six- or nine-month regimen that included both isoniazid and rifampin.

The table below describes the clinician's responsibilities at completion of therapy for cases in which the organisms are drug-susceptible and drug-resistant.

TABLE 9: CLINICIAN'S RESPONSIBILITIES AT COMPLETION OF THERAPY

Drug Susceptibility	Clinician's Actions
Drug-susceptible organisms	Instruct the patient to promptly report the development of any symptoms, particularly prolonged cough, fever, or weight loss.
Organisms resistant to isoniazid, rifampin, or both	Individualize follow-up evaluation. ²⁴



For consultation regarding post-treatment evaluation, contact the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275.

Treatment in Special Situations

Treatment of tuberculosis (TB) in the following situations requires a high level of expertise or close consultation with an expert to provide appropriate management:

- Drug-resistant TB
- Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection
- Alcoholism
- Liver disease
- Renal insufficiency and end-stage renal disease (ESRD)
- TB associated with tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF- α) antagonists
- Culture-negative pulmonary TB
- Extrapulmonary TB
- Pregnancy and breastfeeding
- TB in children



For consultation regarding treatment in the following situations, contact the Montana Tuberculosis Program at 406-444-0275.

Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis



Treatment of TB caused by drug-resistant organisms should be provided by, or in close consultation with, an expert in the management of these difficult situations. Second-line regimens often represent the patient's last hope for being cured, and inappropriate management can have life-threatening consequences.²⁵

Drug resistance is proven only by drug-susceptibility testing performed in a competent laboratory. A patient with a strain of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* resistant to both isoniazid (INH) and rifampin (RIF) has multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB). Refer MDR-TB patients immediately to a specialist or seek consultation with a specialized treatment center.²⁶

Acquired drug resistance usually develops when an inadequate drug regimen is prescribed (e.g., inappropriate drugs or insufficient dosage) or when there is a combined failure of both the patient and the provider to ensure that an adequate regimen is taken. A patient with acquired drug resistance may transmit his or her strain to others, who may then develop primary drug-resistant TB.²⁷



For consultation regarding the treatment of drug-resistant TB, contact the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275.

Resources

- ATS, CDC, IDSA. “Treatment of Tuberculosis” (*MMWR* 2003;52[No. RR-11]:11-12, 68–70).
- CDC. “Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis” (*TB Elimination Fact Sheet*; accessed April 23, 2007).

Human Immunodeficiency Virus Infection

Management of HIV-related TB is complex and requires expertise in the management of both HIV disease and TB. Because HIV-infected patients often take numerous medications, some of which interact with antituberculosis medications, clinicians are strongly encouraged to consult with experts who treat HIV-related TB.

It is especially important to use directly observed therapy (DOT) and other adherence-promoting strategies with patients with HIV-related TB.



The following are contraindicated in HIV-infected patients:

- Isoniazid-rifapentine (INH-RPT) once weekly
- Twice-weekly rifampin (RIF)- or rifabutin (RFB)-based regimens in patients with CD4+ cell counts of less than 100 per microliter²⁸



Patients with HIV-related TB may experience a temporary exacerbation of symptoms, signs, or radiographic manifestations (paradoxical reactions) of TB while receiving antituberculosis treatment.²⁹

Resources

- ATS, CDC, IDSA. “Treatment of Tuberculosis” (*MMWR* 2003;52[No. RR-11]:9, 50–55).
- ATS, CDC. “Notice to Readers: Updated Guidelines for the Use of Rifamycins for the Treatment of Tuberculosis among HIV-infected Patients Taking Protease Inhibitors or Nonnucleoside Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitors” (*MMWR* 2004;53[No. 2]:37).
- CDC. *Self-Study Modules on Tuberculosis* (Division of Tuberculosis Elimination Web site; 1999). These modules are no longer available online.
- CDC. “Treatment of Drug-Susceptible TB in HIV-Infected Persons” (*TB Elimination Fact Sheet*, March 2003).

- CDC. “Treating Opportunistic Infections Among HIV-exposed and Infected Children” (*MMWR* 2004;53[No. RR-14]).

Alcoholism

Because of the effectiveness of isoniazid (INH), rifampin (RIF), and pyrazinamide (PZA), they should be used if at all possible, even in the presence of preexisting liver disease. Drug-induced hepatitis, the most serious common adverse reaction, is defined as a serum aspartate aminotransferase (AST) level more than three times the upper limit of normal in the presence of symptoms or five times the upper limit of normal in the absence of symptoms.

It should be noted that TB itself may involve the liver, causing abnormal liver function. Thus, not all abnormalities in liver function tests noted at baseline should be attributed to causes other than TB. Hepatic abnormalities caused by TB will improve with effective treatment.³⁰

Prior to treatment, serologic testing for hepatitis viruses A, B, and C should be performed particularly if the patient uses alcohol. Close monitoring—with symptom review and repeat measurements of AST and bilirubin—is essential in managing a patient with elevated serum AST.³¹

To monitor for hepatitis:

- Conduct clinical monitoring on the first visit and repeat monthly to check for signs of hepatitis.
- Educate patients about symptoms and signs of adverse reactions, and instruct patients to stop treatment should symptoms occur. Symptoms of adverse reactions include anorexia, nausea, vomiting, dark urine, icterus, rash, persistent paresthesias of hands and feet, persistent fatigue, weakness or fever lasting three or more days, abdominal tenderness (right upper quadrant), easy bruising or bleeding, and arthralgia.³²
- If the patient is on directly observed therapy (DOT), perform a symptom review at each DOT visit to assess if there are any side effects or adverse reactions.
- Have the patient sign and keep a copy of the “Treatment of Active TB Education Form.”



For assistance with decisions on treatment of TB with alcoholism, contact the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275.

Liver Disease

Management of TB in patients with unstable or advanced liver disease is difficult. The likelihood of drug-induced hepatitis may be greater in these patients. The implications of drug-induced hepatitis for patients with marginal hepatic reserve are potentially serious, even life-threatening. Also, fluctuations in the biochemical indicators of liver function (with/without symptoms) related to the preexisting liver disease confound monitoring for drug-induced hepatitis.³³



For all patients with preexisting liver disease, frequent clinical and laboratory monitoring should be performed to detect drug-induced hepatic injury.³⁴

Resources

- ATS, CDC, IDSA. "Treatment of Tuberculosis" (*MMWR* 2003;52[No. RR-11]:11, 65).



For consultation regarding patients with preexisting liver disease, contact the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275.

Renal Insufficiency and End-Stage Renal Disease

Renal insufficiency complicates the management of TB because some antituberculosis medications are cleared by the kidneys. Management may be further complicated by the removal of some antituberculosis agents via hemodialysis. To facilitate DOT (three times per week) and avoid premature removal of the drugs, administer all antituberculosis drugs immediately after hemodialysis.³⁵

Resources

- ATS, CDC, IDSA. "Treatment of Tuberculosis" (*MMWR* 2003;52[No. RR-11]:10–11, 63–65).

Tuberculosis Associated with Tumor Necrosis Factor-Alpha Antagonists

TB is a potential consequence of treatment with tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF- α) antagonists such as the following:

- Infliximab (Remicade[®])
- Etanercept (Enbrel[®])
- Adalimumab (Humira[®])

These drugs work by blocking TNF- α , an inflammatory cytokine, and are approved for treating rheumatoid arthritis and other selected autoimmune diseases. Blocking TNF- α can allow TB disease to emerge from latent TB infection (LTBI). Healthcare providers should take steps to prevent TB in immunocompromised patients and remain vigilant for TB as a cause of unexplained febrile illness.³⁶



Patients should be screened for risk factors for *M. tuberculosis* infection and tested for infection before initiating immunosuppressive therapies, including TNF- α antagonists.³⁷

Resources

- CDC. “Tuberculosis Associated with Blocking Agents against Tumor Necrosis Factor-Alpha—California, 2002–2003” (*MMWR* 2004;53[No. 30]:83–686).

Culture-Negative Pulmonary Tuberculosis

A diagnosis of TB should not be ruled out if *M. tuberculosis* cannot be isolated from persons suspected of having pulmonary TB on the basis of clinical features and chest radiographic examination. Alternative diagnoses should be carefully considered and further appropriate diagnostic studies undertaken in persons with apparent culture-negative TB.³⁸

A diagnosis of culture-negative pulmonary TB can be made if all the following conditions are met:

- Initial acid-fast bacilli (AFB) smears and cultures are negative.
- Clinical or radiographic response occurs within two months of initiation of therapy.
- No other diagnosis has been established.³⁹

After the initial phase (first two months), continue treatment with an additional two months of isoniazid and rifampin during the continuation phase to complete a total of four months of treatment.⁴⁰ However, HIV-infected patients with culture-negative pulmonary TB should be treated for a minimum of six months.⁴¹



For consultation regarding the treatment of TB in a patient with negative cultures, contact the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275.

Resources

- ATS, CDC, IDSA. "Treatment of Tuberculosis" (*MMWR* 2003;52[No. RR-11]:10, 61).

Extrapulmonary Tuberculosis

The basic principles for treating pulmonary TB also apply to extrapulmonary forms of the disease. The addition of corticosteroids is recommended for patients with TB pericarditis and TB meningitis. Recommendations concerning duration of therapy are as follows:

- Use a six-month course of therapy for TB involving any site.⁴² **Exceptions:** For bone or joint TB, use a six- to nine-month regimen.⁴³ For the meninges, use a 9- to 12-month regimen.⁴⁴
- Consider prolonging therapy for patients with TB in any site that is slow to respond.⁴⁵

Note: Affected lymph nodes may enlarge while patients are receiving appropriate therapy or after treatment has ended without any evidence of bacteriological relapse. On occasion, new nodes can appear during or after treatment as well.⁴⁶



For consultation to discuss length of treatment, contact the Montana TB Program at 406-444-0275.

Resources

- ATS, CDC, IDSA. "Treatment of Tuberculosis" (*MMWR* 2003;52[No. RR-11]:10, 56–61).
- Division of Tuberculosis Elimination. *Fact Sheets* (Division of Tuberculosis Elimination Web site; accessed February 2007).
- CDC. *Self-Study Modules on Tuberculosis* (Division of Tuberculosis Elimination Web site; 1999). These modules are no longer available online.

Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

Because of the risk of TB to the fetus, treatment in pregnant women should be initiated whenever the probability of maternal disease is moderate to high. The initial treatment regimen should consist of isoniazid (INH), rifampin (RIF), and ethambutol (EMB). As pyrazinamide (PZA) generally is not included in the initial treatment regimen, the minimum duration of therapy is nine months. Although these drugs cross the placenta, they do not appear to have teratogenic effects.

Breastfeeding should not be discouraged in women being treated with first-line antituberculosis agents because the small concentrations of drugs in breast milk do not produce toxicity in the nursing newborn. Conversely, drugs in breast milk should not be considered an effective treatment for TB in a nursing infant.⁴⁷

Pyridoxine supplementation (25 mg/day) is recommended for all women taking INH who are either pregnant or breastfeeding.⁴⁸

Resources

- ATS, CDC, IDSA. "Treatment of Tuberculosis" (*MMWR* 2003;52[No. RR-11]:11, 62–63).
- CDC. *Self-Study Modules on Tuberculosis* (Division of Tuberculosis Elimination Web site; 1999). These modules are no longer available online.

Tuberculosis in Children

A pediatric patient is a person below the age of 18 years.



Because of the high risk of disseminated TB in infants and children younger than 5 years of age, treatment should be started as soon as the diagnosis of TB is suspected.⁴⁹

The following recommendations have been developed for children:

- Regimens recommended for infants, children, and adolescents with TB are generally the same as those for adults.
Exception: Ethambutol (EMB) is not used routinely in children.⁵⁰
- Duration of treatment in children is six months.
Exception: For disseminated disease and TB meningitis, use a 9- to 12- month regimen.⁵¹ For other exceptions, refer to "Duration of Treatment" in the "Treatment Regimens and Dosages" topic in this section.
- DOT should always be used in treating children.⁵²

Due to the difficulty of isolating *M. tuberculosis* in a child with pulmonary TB, the choice of drugs for the child is frequently guided by the drug susceptibility test results of the presumed source case. If drug-resistant TB is suspected or the source case isolate is

not available, specimens for microbiological evaluation should be obtained via early morning gastric aspiration, bronchoalveolar lavage, or biopsy.⁵³

Resources

- ATS, CDC, IDSA. "Treatment of Tuberculosis" (*MMWR* 2003;52[No. RR-11]:9–10, 55–56).
- CDC. *Self-Study Modules on Tuberculosis* (Division of Tuberculosis Elimination Web site; 1999).
- Francis J. Curry National Tuberculosis Center. *Pediatric Tuberculosis: An Online Presentation* (Francis J. Curry National Tuberculosis Center Web site; 2007). This presentation is no longer available online.

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- CDC. *Core Curriculum on Tuberculosis (2000)* [Division of Tuberculosis Elimination Web site]. November 2001.
- CDC. *Self-Study Modules on Tuberculosis* (Division of Tuberculosis Elimination Web site; 1999).

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- ³ CDC. Regimens—pulmonary TB. In: Chapter 7: treatment of TB disease. *Core Curriculum on Tuberculosis (2000)* [Division of Tuberculosis Elimination Web site]. Updated November 2001. Accessed July 3, 2006.
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- ⁶ ATS, CDC, IDSA. Treatment of tuberculosis. *MMWR* 2003;52(No. RR-11):5.
- ⁷ ATS, CDC, IDSA. Treatment of tuberculosis. *MMWR* 2003;52(No. RR-11):5.
- ⁸ ATS, CDC, IDSA. Treatment of tuberculosis. *MMWR* 2003;52(No. RR-11):57.
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- ¹⁰ ATS, CDC, IDSA. Treatment of tuberculosis. *MMWR* 2003;52(No. RR-11):6–7.
- ¹¹ ATS, CDC, IDSA. Treatment of tuberculosis. *MMWR* 2003;52(No. RR-11):52.
- ¹² ATS, CDC, IDSA. Treatment of tuberculosis. *MMWR* 2003;52(No. RR-11):6.
- ¹³ ATS, CDC, IDSA. Treatment of tuberculosis. *MMWR* 2003;52(No. RR-11):43.
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- ¹⁷ California Department of Health Services(CDHS)/California Tuberculosis Controllers Association(CTCA). TB case management—core components. *CDHS/CTCA Joint Guidelines* [CTCA Web site]. 1998:9. Accessed July 11, 2006.
- ¹⁸ CDC. Targeted tuberculin testing and treatment of latent tuberculosis infection. *MMWR* 2000;49(No. RR-6):26–29, 38–39.
- ¹⁹ CDC. Module 4: treatment of tuberculosis and tuberculosis infection. *Self-Study Modules on Tuberculosis* [Division of Tuberculosis Elimination Web site]. 1999:8–9, 15–17. These modules are no longer available online. Accessed July 3, 2006.
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