

Diagnosis 1st: Drugs Can Cure And Prevent TB

Today it is no fun to have TB. But it need not be tragic.

Drugs can cure—even prevent—TB. But first the disease must be diagnosed. Unless it is discovered and treated, TB takes a terrible toll.

There are no symptoms in the earliest stages of active TB. You can be sick with the disease—and spreading your germs to others—without knowing it.

As the disease secretly progresses, you develop symptoms. Weakness, fatigue, irritability. Your pulse rate may become rapid. You may have a low-grade fever, and eventually, night sweats.

Weight loss and shortness of breath are signs of well-developed disease.

Taking a tuberculin skin test is the first step to avoid the terrible toll. The results of the test tell you if there are TB germs in your body. And your physician can give you the results in two or three days.

If your reaction to the test is positive, you must take other tests to determine if you only have been infected or have active TB. If the tuberculin and other tests show that you only have a tuberculous infection, taking pills will prevent active disease from developing.

If the tests show you have active disease already, your doctor will prescribe pills to cure it.

Having TB need not be tragic today. But it sometimes is. Last year, nearly 6,500 people died from TB.

Having a tuberculin skin test with your yearly medical check-up makes a lot of sense. For further information contact Alaska TB Association, 406 G Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99502.