



## Tuberculosis FACT SHEET

### Tuberculosis Prevention and Control

## Contact tracing

### What is contact tracing?

A person with *infectious TB disease* may spread *TB infection* to others. The job of public health is not only to help the person with *infectious TB disease* get better, but also to help others that the person may have infected. This helps stop the spread of TB.

Public health workers talk to the person with *infectious TB disease* to find out who they spend time with every day. Family members and close friends are usually the first contacts to have a *TB skin test* to look for *TB infection*.

### Why find contacts?

TB is not easily transmitted. Usually the person with *infectious TB disease* infects fewer than half of the people living in the same house. If it appears that the person has infected their closest contacts, then people who spent less time with the person are also offered a *skin test* to look for *TB infection*.

People have a higher risk of developing *TB disease* within the first 2 years of getting *TB infection*. Contacts who have been infected can be offered *treatment of TB infection* to help their immune system fight the infection and reduce their risk of developing *TB disease*.

Public health workers spend a lot of time and effort tracking down the contacts of people who have *infectious TB disease*. Thanks to their efforts, TB is rare in Canada!

