

Medicines can sometimes produce adverse effects, but usually they do not manifest. The medicine isoniazid (INH) can have the following adverse effects:

- liver problems
- fatigue
- headache
- difficulty concentrating
- skin rash

Discuss the potential adverse effects with the doctor (GP) who prescribed the medicine.

WHAT IF I DECIDE NOT TO TAKE ANY MEDICATION?

If you don't take the medication, the best thing to do would be to have a lung X-ray taken every 6 months for the next 2 years.

Remain alert for symptoms like:

- persistent cough
- loss of weight
- night sweats
- loss of appetite
- generally feeling unwell
- deterioration of general condition
- chest pain.

Please visit your GP if symptoms persist.



If you doubt whether you are taking the right medicine, if you have symptoms due to the use of the medicine, or if you have questions about the treatment, contact your treating doctor or the Infectious Diseases Control doctor or nurse of the Agency for Care and Health in your province:

- **Antwerp:** 03 224 62 04
- **Limburg:** 011 74 22 40
- **East Flanders:** 09 276 13 80
- **Flemish-Brabant:** 016 66 63 50
- **West Flanders:** 050 24 79 00

You can also consult the nurse of the Association for Respiratory Healthcare and Tuberculosis Control (VRGT) in your province:

- **Antwerp:** 03 287 80 10 or **Turnhout:** 014 41 13 62
- **Brussels:** 02 411 94 76
- **Limburg:** 011 22 10 33
- **East Flanders:** 09 225 22 58
- **Flemish-Brabant:** 016 33 25 25
- **West Flanders:** 059 55 54 28

Uit het Nederlands vertaalde folder die ook in het Nederlands te verkrijgen is via bovenstaande contactgegevens.

Agency for Care and Health
Koning Albert II-laan 35 box 33
1030 BRUSSELS

www.zorg-en-gezondheid.be



Vlaanderen
is zorg

INFECTED WITH TUBERCULOSIS

but not sick

AGENCY FOR
CARE & HEALTH

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INFECTED BUT NOT SICK

Positive skin test

Recently, we conducted a tuberculin skin test on you to see whether you have been infected with the bacteria that can cause tuberculosis. The skin test result was positive. That means that you are infected. The test can also be positive if you were ever vaccinated against tuberculosis in the past.



In some countries vaccination against tuberculosis is still done. This does not offer a complete and life-long protection. A positive tuberculin skin test is difficult to interpret in that case, and it is best to discuss this with your doctor.

Negative lung scan

We also took a lung imaging scan of you to assess whether your lungs have been affected. Tuberculosis is primarily a disease of the lungs. No aberrations are currently visible on the image. That means that you are not sick at the moment. You are also not infectious for your environment.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE THE MEDICATION?



It is best to discuss with your doctor whether medication is necessary in your case.

There is a big difference between being infected with the tuberculosis bacteria and being effectively sick. 90% of infections never lead to the disease manifesting. The body responds to the infection by producing defence substances. This is a protection mechanism of the body. It can often prevent the development of the real disease. Sometimes these substances are not sufficient to ensure that you do not develop tuberculosis.

To prevent you becoming sick, you can follow a preventative treatment. In most cases this involves the medicine isoniazid, also called INH (brand name Nicotibine®). The medicine is available free of charge with a doctor's prescription.

WHAT DO I NEED TO PAY ATTENTION TO WHEN TAKING THE MEDICATION?

It is important to take the medication every day in the prescribed period (which is often long). Otherwise, the treatment is useless, and the bacteria can become insensitive to the medicine.

- It is best to take the medicine on an empty stomach at the same set time once a day.
- The medicine can be in the form of tablets, powders or a drink.
- For young children INH powder can be taken 30 minutes before breakfast with a spoonful of grenadine.
- It is better not to consume any alcohol in the period when you are taking the medicine because it can have a bad effect on the liver.
- Some people are overly sensitive to the sun while they are taking the medicine. Therefore, it is advised to stay out of the sun as much as possible.
- Do not change your medication yourself without consulting your doctor.