

# Treatment for Latent Tuberculosis (TB) Infection: Levofloxacin

Your tests show that you have latent TB infection, also referred to as “LTBI.” Latent TB infection means TB germs are in your body but it is like the germs are sleeping. The latent TB germs are not hurting you and cannot spread to other people. If the TB germs wake up and become active, they can make you sick. This is called active TB disease. You can spread TB to other people if you have active TB disease. Taking medications for latent TB infection can help prevent the latent TB germs from waking up and becoming active TB disease.

The TB germs that you were exposed to were multidrug-resistant TB (MDR TB). MDR TB is when the TB germs are resistant to at least two of the main TB medications. These strong germs cannot be treated with the medications we usually use to treat LTBI. For this reason you will need to take a different medication than someone with regular LTBI.

## How do I prevent active TB disease?

You can take medicine to prevent getting active TB disease. Levofloxacin is a medicine used to treat LTBI. It kills the sleeping TB germs before they make you sick. It can take many months for the medicine to kill the TB germs because the germs are strong. Take your Levofloxacin as often and as long as your doctor or nurse tells you.

## Why should I take medicine if I do not feel sick?

Sleeping TB germs are much easier to kill before they wake up and make you sick.

## What if I do not take the medicine?

If you don't take Levofloxacin, miss too many days, or stop taking the medicine before your doctor or nurse tells you to, you may become sick with active TB disease. It is important to kill TB germs so you and your family stay healthy.

## What if I had a BCG vaccine?

BCG protects children from severe forms of TB but only for a few years. It cannot protect against getting LTBI or active TB disease. If you have had BCG, you should still take medicine for LTBI to protect yourself and others.

## What if I cannot pay for Levofloxacin?

Ask your doctor or nurse for help to get TB medicine from the Minnesota Department of Health Tuberculosis Program.



## What if I move away?

Tell your doctor or nurse before you move to another state or city. They can help you continue to get TB medicine after you move.

## What should I know about LTBI medication?

- Tell your doctor about other medicines you are taking.
- Do not take Levofloxacin within 2 hours of eating or drinking any milk-based products, antacids, or multivitamins.
- If you have diabetes, check your blood sugar levels regularly.
- Avoid becoming pregnant while taking Levofloxacin. Call your doctor or nurse right away if you become pregnant.

**Most people take Levofloxacin without problems. Some people do have problems, such as:**

- Upset stomach or vomiting
- Headache or dizziness (light headedness)
- Severe diarrhea
- Pain in your abdomen
- Skin rash or itching
- Yellow skin or eyes
- Pain, burning or tingling in your hands or feet
- Pain in your muscles or joints
- Feelings of darkness or changes in mood

**If you have any of these problems:**

1. Stop taking your medication.
2. Call your doctor or nurse right away.  
Do not wait for your next appointment.



### **Remember to take your TB medicine.**

If you miss too many days, the medicine might not work. Here are some ways to help remember:

- Keep your Levofloxacin where you will see it.
- Take your Levofloxacin at the same time of day. For example, after you brush your teeth or just before you go to sleep.
- Ask someone to remind you.
- Mark your calendar after you take your Levofloxacin.
- Post a reminder or alarm on your cell phone.
- Use a pill reminder box.

If you miss any days, write them down so you can tell your doctor or nurse at your next appointment.

### **Keep all your medical appointments.**

Your doctor or nurse will help make sure your treatment is going well.

My next TB medication appointment

Date:

Time:

Doctor or nurse:

Location:

Minnesota Department of Health  
Tuberculosis (TB) Prevention and Control Program  
P.O. Box 64975, St. Paul, MN 55164-0975  
651-201-5414  
[www.health.state.mn.us/tb](http://www.health.state.mn.us/tb)

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