

# Chest x-ray monitoring for tuberculosis (TB)

## What is chest x-ray monitoring and why do I need it?

Your doctor may ask you to have regular chest x-rays to monitor tuberculosis (TB). These x-rays help to check for any changes in your lungs.

Chest x-rays are used to:

- see if TB infection has changed to TB disease.
- check that TB disease is getting better with medication.

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## Are x-rays harmful?

X-rays use a small amount of radiation. The amount of radiation in an x-ray is like the radiation exposure during a long plane flight. This amount of radiation is considered safe even if you have many x-rays.

If you could be pregnant, it is important to let the doctor know before the x-ray. The doctor will discuss with you if the x-ray should wait until after birth. If you need an x-ray while pregnant, we will ask you to wear a special lead apron to protect your baby.

Breastfeeding mothers can safely feed their baby without risk to the milk or baby.

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## What happens when I have a chest x-ray?

A radiographer will take your x-ray. The radiographer may ask you to remove jewellery or change into a patient gown before they take your x-ray. If you would like to have a support person in the room, please ask the radiographer.

It only takes a few seconds to take an x-ray. While the x-ray is taken, you will be asked to take a deep breath and remain still.

If you are being seen at a TB clinic or a chest clinic, let them know when and where you had your last chest x-ray.

The x-ray picture will be sent to your doctor. The doctor will compare the picture to your previous chest x-rays to look for changes in your lungs. This might take some time. Your clinic will contact you if there are any changes in your lungs and if you need to see your doctor again.

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## How long will I need chest x-ray monitoring?

Most people have chest x-rays every 6-12 months. If there are no changes to your x-ray over 2-3 years your doctor may decide you no longer need chest x-ray monitoring. If you have questions or concerns, please discuss them with your doctor.

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## Further information

For more information on TB, visit [health.nsw.gov.au/tb](https://health.nsw.gov.au/tb)

For free help in your language, call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 13 14 50.