

# Side effects of anti-tuberculosis drugs



Some patients may develop adverse drug reactions. Report early to the doctor or the nurse when treatment side effects are suspected. Common or serious side effects include the following:

1. **Drug allergy:** Any drug can cause drug allergy, often in the form of itchiness, skin rash, urticaria, or fever. Mild allergy is often self-limiting or relieved by use of anti-histamine. More severe allergy may persist or worsen.



2. **Hepatotoxicity:** Isoniazid, rifampin and pyrazinamide can cause inflammation of the liver. Typical symptoms include loss of appetite, persistent nausea (more than a few hours), vomiting and jaundice. Blood tests are required for diagnosis.

3. **Ocular toxicity:** Ethambutol (and rarely, isoniazid) may cause inflammation of the optic nerve in < 1% patients on average. Persistent blurring of vision (more than a few hours) must be immediately reported.



4. **Peripheral neuropathy:** Isoniazid can rarely cause inflammation of nerves that present as persistent numbness of hands or feet.

5. **Gouty attacks and non-specific joint discomfort:** Pyrazinamide may cause gouty attacks or non-specific joint discomfort.



6. **Ototoxicity or vestibular symptoms:** Injectables like streptomycin can cause damage to the vestibulocochlear nerve that may present as tinnitus, dizziness or impair hearing.



7. **Nephrotoxicity:** Injectable drugs may cause damage to kidneys, blood tests are required for diagnosis.

8. **Drug-drug interactions:** Rifampicin affects the metabolism of some drugs, for example, anticoagulants, oral contraceptives, some drugs used for treating diabetes mellitus, and some antiretroviral drugs used for treating HIV.