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World Tuberculosis Day: Know all about the disease

ANI | New Delhi [India]

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According to [World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](#), [tuberculosis \(TB\)](#) is one of the top 10 causes of death globally and resulted in 1.8 million deaths in 2016, alone. 95% of [TB](#) deaths occur in low-and middle-income countries.

[Tuberculosis](#) is a serious form of [infection](#) that affects lungs and at times other parts of the body like bones, joints and kidneys. It is caused by [bacteria Mycobacterium tuberculosis](#).

It spreads through air and a person can contract [TB](#) by breathing in [TB bacteria](#). These [bacteria](#) get released in the air by a person who already has the [bacteria](#) in his/her body.

[Bacteria](#) that causes [tuberculosis](#) in human beings usually affects the lungs but can also affect other parts of the body. [Infection](#) by [mycobacterium tuberculosis](#) won't necessarily make you sick as you can have either latent [TB](#) or [TB](#) disease.

"[TB](#) happens when a person with latent [TB](#) becomes sick. Some individuals become sick as soon as they get infected, before their immune system can fight back. In other cases, people don't get sick initially but they fall sick when the immune system becomes weak. This can happen due to some other [infections](#) or immunocompromised conditions," said Dr Sireesh, [Consultant Pediatrician](#) & Pediatric Endocrinologist, TeleradRxDx.

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- People infected in the preceding two years
- People with immune-compromised conditions
- Those with other preexisting [diseases](#) or conditions such as [diabetes](#) and [chronic renal failure](#).

Signs and Symptoms:

It is very difficult to diagnose [TB](#) based only on symptoms as [TB](#) mimics symptoms of some other [diseases](#). In such scenarios, tests should be performed to confirm the diagnosis and reveal definite evidence of [TB bacteria](#).

Common symptoms of pulmonary [tuberculosis](#) includes

- [Bad cough](#) that lasts more than one week
- Pain in chest
- Weakness
- Blood in sputum
- Fatigue
- Weight loss
- Lack of appetite
- Chills
- Fever
- Night sweat

Diagnosis of Tuberculosis:

Some of the tests for [TB](#) diagnosis focus directly on looking for the [bacteria](#) while other tests, such as chest X-rays, look for the effect of the [bacteria](#) on a patient's body.

Treatment:

Medications are the cornerstone for the treatment of [TB](#); however, treating [TB](#) takes much longer than treatment for other bacterial [infections](#). Apart from the regular anti [tuberculosis](#) drugs there are various new drugs that are being tested and studied as add-on therapy to the current combination treatment.

Common myths and facts about Tuberculosis:

1) Myth: [Tuberculosis](#) occurs only among lower socioeconomic group

Fact: [Tuberculosis](#) can be contracted by anyone. However, certain population such as people with reduced immunity, elderly and immigrants are at greater risk of developing [tuberculosis](#). Family members and other individuals in contact with them are also at the risk of developing [tuberculosis](#).

2) Myth: [TB](#) is a hereditary disease.

Fact: Genetics plays no role in transmission and acquisition of [Tuberculosis](#). It is not hereditary however, members of the same family may get infected as it is transmitted through the air.

3) Myth: [TB](#) is caused by excessive smoking



4) Myth: TB is incurable and is fatal

Fact: TB is completely curable however; the treatment of TB takes much longer when compared to other bacterial infections. In most cases, because of lengthy treatment regimen and side effects of drugs, patients often discontinue the treatment. It is important that this does not happen and patients complete their treatment which will help them in complete recovery.


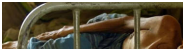



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