

Newsletter

World TB Day 2022



Each year, we recognize World TB Day on March 24. This annual event commemorates the date in 1882 when Dr. Robert Koch announced his discovery of Mycobacterium tuberculosis, the bacillus that causes tuberculosis (TB), this year's theme: invest to end TB and save lives highlights the economic burden of TB in countries affected and pushes for investment of resources among all to help end TB.

Tuberculosis (TB) is a potentially serious infectious disease that mainly affects respiration. Mycobacterium bacilli, the bacteria that causes tuberculosis spreads from person to person through tiny droplets released into the air when someone coughs and/or sneezes.

Diagnosis

Tuberculosis (TB) can be diagnosed using series of test, while some act as a screening test, others offer a definitive diagnosis of Tuberculosis. Screening test include

1. MANTOUX TUBERCLIN SKIN TEST:

This is recommended for people who have not been vaccinated against Tuberculosis or have previous exposure to it as it may read false positive in them due to cross-reactivity.

2. INTERFERON GAMMA TEST:

This is best used as a screening test for those who have been previously vaccinated for TB

Treatment

Some groups of anti-biotics are given to infected individuals for 6 months to clear off the infection, contacts of those infected are also given prophylactic antibiotics to prevent them from coming down with TB.

Prevention

Getting vaccinated for TB from childhood goes a long way in its prevention. Vaccines like BCG are usually given to children in their early ages.

Signs and symptoms of active TB include:

- Coughing for three or more weeks
- Coughing up blood or mucus
- Chest pain
- Pain with breathing or coughing
- Unintentional weight loss,
- Fatigue
- Fever and Night sweats
- Loss of appetite

It can also affect other parts of your body, including the kidneys, spine or brain.

Definitive test:

- **ACID FAST BACILLI TEST:** This is the gold standard in making a definitive diagnosis of TB
- **GENE EXPERT TEST:** This is a molecular test that detects the DNA in Mycobacteria bacilli. It uses a sputum sample and can give a result in less than 2 hours. It can also be used to detect drug resistance TB
- **CHEST XRAY:** This can also help reveal the spread of TB in the lungs. It is done in synergy with the other test mentioned above.

