Tuberculosis Exposure Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. TB can kill approximately one half of patients within five years and produce significant morbidity (illness) in others. Inadequate therapy for TB can lead to drug-resistant strains of tuberculosis.
2. Tuberculosis (TB) is caused by bacteria (Mycobacterium tuberculosis) that most often affect the lungs. Tuberculosis is curable and preventable.
3. TB is spread from person to person through the air. When people with lung TB cough, sneeze or spit, they propel the TB germs into the air. A person needs to inhale only a few of these germs to become infected.
4. About one-quarter of the world’s population has a TB infection, which means people have been infected by TB bacteria but are not (yet) ill with the disease and cannot transmit it.
5. People infected with TB bacteria have a 5–10% lifetime risk of falling ill with TB. Those with compromised immune systems, such as people living with HIV, malnutrition or diabetes, or people who use tobacco, have a higher risk of falling ill.
6. When a person develops active TB disease, the symptoms (such as cough, fever, night sweats, or weight loss) may be mild for many months. This can lead to delays in seeking care, and results in transmission of the bacteria to others. People with active TB can infect 5–15 other people through close contact over the course of a year.
7. Tuberculosis mostly affects adults in their most productive years. However, all age groups are at risk. Over 95% of cases and deaths are in developing countries.
8. Alcohol use disorder and tobacco smoking increase the risk of TB disease by a factor of 3.3 and 1.6, respectively. In

2019, 0.72 million new TB cases worldwide were attributable to alcohol use disorder and 0.70 million were attributable to smoking.

STATS

- According to the Centers for Disease Control, over one third of the world's population (nearly 2 billion people) have tuberculosis! New infections occur at the rate of one per second and approximately 2 million people die per year from the disease! Statistically, one in ten latent infections will progress to "active" TB disease which typically kills half of its victims if left untreated. The disease is experiencing a resurgence because of a rise in HIV infection levels, drug abuse, and HIV/AIDS.
- During 2019, the United States reported the lowest number of TB cases (8,916) and lowest incidence rate (2.7 cases per 100,000 persons) since individual TB case reporting began in 1953.
- In 2018, the most recent data available, 542 deaths in the United States were attributed to TB. This is an increase from 515 deaths attributed to TB in 2017.
- TB is the leading cause of death among people living with HIV, causing more than one third of all AIDS-related deaths in 2015. Almost 60% of the estimated global HIV-related TB cases are not diagnosed and not treated.
- Overall, a relatively small proportion (5–15%) of the estimated 2–3 billion people infected with TB will actually develop TB disease during their lifetime.