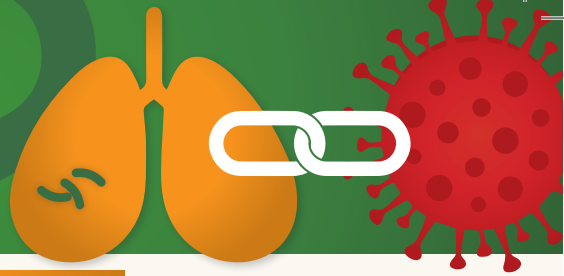


TB&COVID -19



WHAT IS THE LINK BETWEEN TB AND COVID-19?

- People with TB may have weak immune system and may be at risk of getting infected with COVID-19
- If you have TB disease you are also at risk of suffering more severe symptoms from COVID-19. The risk is even higher if you are HIV positive or diabetic
- Symptoms of TB and Covid-19 are similar (cough, fever, night sweats) however symptoms of Covid-19 start suddenly. Sore throat, nausea and vomiting, and loss of smell and taste are associated with Covid-19 and not TB.
- Both are transmitted by droplets (coughing and sneezing) but Covid-19 is also found on surfaces, and is more contagious than TB.
- TB is treated with 6 months of antibiotics, while there is no current treatment for Covid-19.

COVID-19 WHILST ON TB TREATMENT

- You can get infected with the COVID-19 whilst on TB treatment
- You must always practice good hygiene measures to protect yourself
- You may develop new symptoms, or your symptoms may get worse. If this happens report this to your health care provider
- To prevent the spread of these illnesses, it is important to cover your cough and to keep your home well ventilated. For Covid-19, avoiding crowds is especially important and washing hands frequently is essential.
- TB can be prevented by TB Preventive Treatment (TPT)



WHY IS TB TREATMENT IMPORTANT IN THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

- People with lung damage, such as TB patients, or those with weak immune systems, including those with poorly controlled HIV, may suffer from more severe forms of COVID-19 if infected
- Treating TB improves the body's ability to fight other infections, like COVID-19

TB PREVENTIVE THERAPY

WHAT IS TPT?

- Medication is given to people with TB infection (sleeping TB) to prevent them from getting sick.
- We must limit the risk of spreading TB disease to others; taking a full course of TPT will reduce that risk, especially if you are in close contact with someone infected with TB

CAN I CONTINUE TAKING TPT IF I GET COVID?

- Yes

WHAT HAPPENS IF I STOP TAKING TPT IF I GET SICK WITH COVID-19

- It will not have a serious consequence if you continue retaking it within 4 weeks of stopping; stopping it for any longer will reduce the effectiveness of the medication and you will have to restart the course from the beginning
- It is important to resume TPT immediately so as to maintain the effectiveness of the course. If more than 4 weeks have passed, the TPT course may have to be restarted.

TB AND HIV MORTALITY

- TB is closely linked to HIV and is the leading cause of illness and death among people living with HIV.
- People living with HIV should be screened regularly for TB.
- All TB patients should be offered an HIV test.



PREVENTION

- TB can be anywhere, everywhere and everyone must screen for TB.
- Know the signs and symptoms, test and complete treatment.

PREVENTION

- Go to your nearest clinic and get screened and tested for TB and HIV if you experience continuous coughing for more than two weeks, unexplained weight loss, night sweats and fever.
- Knowing your TB status reduces the spread of TB, live a healthy life style by exercising and eating healthy.

TREATMENT

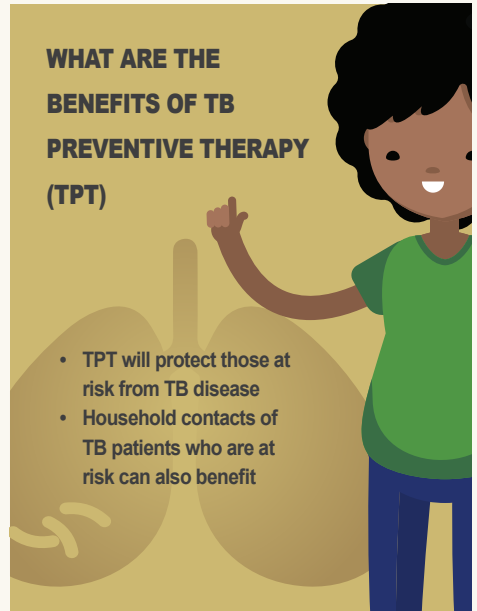
- Take your TB treatment without fail for the full 6 months even if you feel better and you will be cured.
- TB should be diagnosed and treated as soon as possible to reduce the damage and the risk of transmission to others.
- Latent TB infection can be treated with a 6 month course of antibiotics.

CONTROL

- Take responsibility for your illness – don't allow TB to spread to your loved ones.
- Always cover your mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing.
- Cough into a tissue or the inside of your elbow.
- Throw all used tissues into the dustbin.
- Always open windows and doors at home and crowded areas i.e. rooms, churches, taxis, etc.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF TB PREVENTIVE THERAPY (TPT)

- TPT will protect those at risk from TB disease
- Household contacts of TB patients who are at risk can also benefit



GO TO YOUR NEAREST CLINIC IF YOU NEED MORE INFORMATION ON TB