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A Look Into Tuberculosis
By Adrian Vega and Brennan Heath

Prognosis for Tuberculosis

You may not know if you have latent TB because you will not have any symptoms. If you have active TB though, you will have to take many different medicines to become well again. You will live a normal life both while treatment and after. Tuberculosis, when not treated, can lead to cavities in the lungs that cause bleeding or can be infected. A hole can form in between airways in the lungs leading to difficulty breathing and in worst cases death. In the long term you can develop permanent lung damage and other organs it is possible for your central nervous system and circulatory system, lymph nodes, skin, joints and bones to become damaged as well. Some of the initial effects of tuberculosis are skin rashes, itching, blistering and peeling of the skin (CDC, 2014).

Symptoms of Tuberculosis

If you have active TB then you will have symptoms and they can include: a cough with thick, cloudy, and bloody mucus from the lungs for more than 2 weeks, fever, chills, and night sweats, fatigue and weakness, loss of appetite and unexplained weight loss, shortness of breath and chest pain (CDC, 2012).

Different types of TB

There are two different types of TB, active and latent. If you have active TB then you will have symptoms and they can include: a cough with thick, cloudy, and bloody mucus from the lungs for more than 2 weeks, fever, chills, and night sweats, fatigue and weakness, loss of appetite and unexplained weight loss, shortness of breath and chest pain. If you do not have any of these symptoms, you could still have latent TB. Most people who have latent TB can live their life normally and may not even know that they have tuberculosis. If you have active TB however, then you will have some if not all of the symptoms mentioned in the prognosis (Mayo Clinic, n.d.).

Life with Tuberculosis

The human body’s reaction to Tuberculosis is it will fight the infection by closing off the disease into tiny pockets called tubercles. The bacteria will stay alive but cannot spread to other tissue and is not contagious. This stage is called latent TB, and most people never go farther than this stage. Some people who get past latent TB get what is called Active TB. This is when the bacterium starts to spread and symptoms like coughing, night sweats are evident (Nursing Link, 2014).

How we can treat different types of TB

If you catch Tuberculosis then you have two options. You can take your preferred medicine once for six months and then be free of TB however; if you stop taking your medicines before your six months are over, you will have to take a different group of medicine because your tuberculosis is immune to the medicines that you took initially. (CDC, 2011)

How treatment works

1. Ethambutol works by stopping the bacteria that cause this disease from growing and increasing in numbers (Net Doctor, n.d.).
2. Isoniazid is an antibiotic and works by stopping the growth of bacteria (WebMD, n.d.).
3. Pyrazinamide kills or stops the growth of certain bacteria that cause tuberculosis (MedicinePlus, n.d.).
4. Rifabutin works by killing the bacteria that are causing the infection (RxList, n.d.).
5. Rifampin prevents bacteria from spreading in your body (RxList, n.d.).
6. Rifapentine is an antibiotic that fights bacteria (RxList, n.d.).

Emerging Treatments

A new alternative “treatment for tuberculosis may be vitamin D, studies have shown vitamin D to prevented cure tuberculosis because white blood cells convert vitamin D into an active form that helps make a protein that kills tuberculosis bacteria (Mercola, n.d.).