

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

TUBERCULOSIS CONTINUES TO BE A PUBLIC HEALTH THREAT

March 24, 2021

Tuberculosis remains a global public health threat. It is estimated that one of every three persons in the world has latent TB infection. Each year 1.5 million people worldwide die of tuberculosis, making it the world's top infectious disease killer.

March 24 commemorates the day in 1882 when Dr. Robert Koch discovered that tubercle bacillus is the causative agent for tuberculosis. This observation is held March 24th of each year to highlight the progress made in the fight against tuberculosis. This day of recognition also promotes increased awareness that TB continues to be a significant public health concern.

The theme that was selected for 2021 is "The Clock is Ticking". The theme conveys the sense that the world is running out of time to act on the commitment to end TB made by global leaders. Ending TB requires concentrated action by public and private sectors as well as individuals and communities.

WORLD TB DAY – MARCH 24, 2021



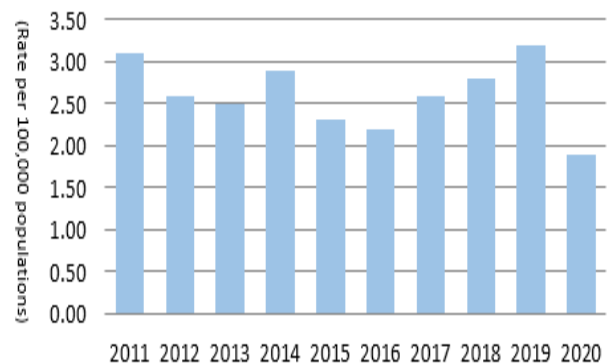
"THE CLOCK IS TICKING"

California continues to contribute the greatest number of cases to the nation's total TB morbidity. In 2020, 2,329 cases were reported to the state. Riverside County reported 45 cases in 2020 compared to 76 cases in 2019.

CASE RATE

The TB case rate has ranged from 2.2 to 1.9 over the last 5 years. Rates vary by race/ethnicity and age.

Tuberculosis Rate by Year
Riverside County 2011-2020



PROFILE OF TB CASES

TB continues to be primarily a disease of older adults with 67% of reported cases in Riverside County occurring in person's age 45 to 65 years. Two cases were reported in the 4 years and younger group.

RACE/ETHNICITY

Data for 2020 indicates that minorities continue to be disproportionately affected by tuberculosis. Among reported cases, 67% were Hispanic and 22% were Asian.

TB Cases by Race/Ethnicity, 2020

African American/Black	0
Asian	10
Asian Pacific Islander	1
Hispanic	30
White	4

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

The 2020 TB case were distributed throughout the county. The largest number of cases was reported in the western region.

TB Cases by Region, 2020

Geographic Area	Cases Reported
West	24
Mid-County	2
South	4
East	15

CASES BY SITE OF DISEASE

In 2020, 87% of the cases were diagnosed with pulmonary disease. Extra-pulmonary sites included: cervical lymph nodes, bone and peritoneum. Although these sites do not present a communicability risk to others, they can present a health challenge for the individual patient.

TUBERCULOSIS AND COVID-19

Among persons in California with TB disease in 2020, 138 (8.1%) also had COVID-19 infection identified in 2020. TB and COVID-19 occurred within 120 days among 80 cases. It is important to continue the fight against TB, even in face of the COVID pandemic. Riverside County reported several TB cases with COVID-19 last year.

TB CAN BE PREVENTED WITH TREATMENT OF LATENT TB INFECTION (LTBI)

More than 2 million Californians have LTBI. Approximately 1.8 million were born outside the US, of whom only 20% are aware of their LTBI and only 12% have been treated. Because an estimated 85% of cases occur because of progression from LTBI, treating LTBI will prevent many TB cases in California.

Risk assessment tools are available for use by medical providers to identify persons at risk for LTBI for testing and treatment.

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/TB-Risk-Assessment.aspx>

New guidelines recommending shorter treatment for LTBI are now available for California and the US.

<https://ctca.org/guidelines/guidelines-latent-tuberculosis-infection-guideline/>

https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/rr/rr6901a1.htm?s_cid=rr6901a1_x

MOVING TOWARD TB ELIMINATION

Although progress has been made at the national, state, and local levels in the fight against tuberculosis, the disease continues to impact individuals, their families and communities throughout the world.

Tuberculosis is reportable to Public Health, Disease Control within one day of identification. Phone: (951) 358-5107 Fax: (951) 358-7922. TB may also be reported through the California Reportable Disease Information Exchange (CalREDIE).