Reference

About Tuberculosis

Incidence of tuberculosis (TB) in Tokyo (2016)

Number of newly registered TB patients: 2,340

Morbidity rate*: 17.2 (Second highest in Japan) (*Morbidity rate: Number of patients per 100,000 population)

Number of deaths: 212 persons

Symptoms of TB

In addition to respiratory symptoms such as coughs with phlegm and chest pains, the symptoms of TB include (mild) fever, weight loss, night sweats, and fatigue. When these symptoms continue for a prolonged period of time, caution is necessary.

TB infection route

TB is an airborne disease. Typically, the infection is caused only by bacteria entering the peripheries of the lungs (pulmonary alveoli), and does not spread through clothes or skin contact, water or food.

Difference between infection and active disease

Infection

A condition where TB bacteria has entered a person's body, and yet no symptoms have appeared. A person with latent TB cannot infect others, and shows no abnormal findings in physical exams. Taking small doses of anti-tuberculosis drugs can suppress the infection from becoming an active disease. The percentage of those infected with TB bacteria who actually develop the illness is about 10-20%, and in many cases occur between 6-24 months of infection.

Active disease

The condition where TB bacteria multiply within a person's body and cause physical abnormalities and symptoms. TB is not contagious in the early stage when there is little bacteria, however, as the disease progresses, bacteria are discharged in large amounts in the person's cough or sputum and can lead to the spread of infection.

Testing exposed persons

Tests are conducted to check whether the person (contact) who shared the same air space with an infected person is infected with TB bacteria or has active TB disease. Generally, the contacts are classified according to their degree of exposure, and tests are conducted starting from those with higher degrees of contact. The following are some examples of the TB tests.

- To test for active TB disease: Chest x-rays, etc.
- To test infection with TB bacteria: Blood tests, TB skin tests, etc.

$\boxed{\text{Mass infection}}$

Cases of mass infection need to be reported to the national government. Mass infection refers to situations in which the same infection source is found in two families or more, infecting 20 or more persons with TB bacteria. However, in this case, one person with active TB equals six infected persons.