

Tuberculosis morbidity in Zimbabwe

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Background: According to WHO, Zimbabwe is one of the top thirty countries burdened with a high tuberculosis (TB) morbidity rate. The country is also facing more cases among HIV positive patients and a burst of new cases with Rifampicin resistance strains (Rif-TB).

Aim. In this study, we will try to review Zimbabwe's current morbidity status, focusing on the groups most affected by TB and how best to help the WHO reduce these numbers in the near future.

Material and Methods. To understand Zimbabwe's current morbidity status worldwide and on a national level, data from these published sources was used: The Global Tuberculosis Report 2019 and CDC. These sources reported a greater spread of TB among HIV positive patients. Data also shows an increase in the number of Rifampicin resistant TB strains even among HIV negative patients from the last survey done in 2017. A higher

number of serum positive cases are among males when compared to females, regardless of their HIV status.

Results. When you break down the data analysis, the final results show that 58% of all TB cases affect the male gender. The number of Rifampicin resistant cases have increased to 91% for newly diagnosed and 97% for previously treated patients. In addition, 62% of TB cases recorded are among HIV positive patients, who know their HIV status.

This study shows that HIV positive patients, due their lowered immunity, are at a higher risk of contracting TB. An increased amount of resistant cases in newly diagnosed patients, shows a prevalence of primary resistance TB. This makes treatment more difficult, so the morbidity will remain high in the near future.

Conclusion. The only way to address this problem is to increase education on HIV and TB prevention in Zimbabwe, so that people are aware of the growing treat. If the people are well informed, more cases of TB and HIV will be diagnosed early and treated promptly for the best prognosis. Investors also need to help on purchasing better equipment for testing and more drugs to treat the growing numbers so no one is left without medication. If we help the people, they will help us.