

WORLD TB DAY 2023—‘Yes! We can end TB!’

Each year we commemorate World TB Day to raise public awareness about the devastating health, social and economic consequences of tuberculosis (TB) and to step up efforts to end the global TB epidemic. The date marks the day in 1882 when Dr Robert Koch announced that he had discovered the bacterium that causes TB, which opened the way towards diagnosing and curing this disease.

The revelation of *Mycobacterium* by Dr Robert Koch in 1882, which causes tuberculosis, unlocked the way towards the diagnosis and treatment of the illness. The fact that tuberculosis (TB) is still the world’s greatest infectious killer is something we must face head-on.

On 24th of March, we commemorate World Tuberculosis Day 2023 in an effort to raise awareness about the deadly infection. A deadly illness, tuberculosis, is among the most common causes of death worldwide. Because of this, millions around the world observe this day to promote awareness of tuberculosis and the difficulties in eliminating it.

World TB Day 2023, with the theme ‘**Yes! We can end TB!**’, aims to inspire hope and encourage high-level leadership, increased investments, faster uptake of new WHO recommendations, adoption of innovations, accelerated action, and multisectoral collaboration to combat the TB epidemic.

Why World Tuberculosis Day is Important?

- *Many people still suffer from tuberculosis:* It may seem like an outdated disease, but around one-third of the world’s population is infected with tuberculosis. It is estimated that 2 billion people have tuberculosis. In 2016, 10.4 million people contracted TB, and there were 1.7 million TB-related deaths.
- *It is closer to home than you’d think:* Although TB is a bigger problem in the Third World countries, its impact stretches closer to home than you might think.
- *We can stop TB:* Due to its outdated misconception, tuberculosis is not seen as a relevant issue. Spreading awareness about the disease can help those at high risk seek treatment. About 10.6 million people fell ill with TB in the year 2021. About 1.6 million people died in 2021 due to this deadly disease. 74 million lives have also been saved since the year 2000 because of the global efforts to end TB.

How to Observe World Tuberculosis Day?

- *Get tested:* Disease prevention always starts with you. Testing for tuberculosis is simple, and is sometimes required for travel or job applications. It is always a good thing to have on your medical records and not in your lungs.
- *Spread awareness:* Many people with TB do not even know they have it. Latent tuberculosis can lie dormant for years without a single symptom. This is why it is important to spread awareness about how to get tested and treated. With any disease, prevention is the best cure.
- *Volunteer or donate:* Events are held to spread awareness and raise funds all around the world on World Tuberculosis Day. If you cannot find one, organize one yourself. There are many organizations dedicated to the eradication of TB that are always looking for volunteers. Let us all join hands in the mission to eliminate tuberculosis from our country.

Jai IAP, Jai Hind!

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