



# HEALTH MATTERS

## • I N - F O C U S •

### *World Tuberculosis Day*

#### *Introduction*

World TB day is celebrated annually on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March. This event is to raise awareness about Tuberculosis (TB), which is a serious infectious disease that mainly affects the lungs. The purpose of World TB day is to:

- Raise awareness about the impact of TB worldwide.
- Encourage people to get tested and treated early.
- Reduce the stigma around TB patients.
- Promote adherence to TB treatment.
- Prevent drug resistant TB and its association with HIV/AIDS.

#### *TB prevention*

- A person should cover his/her mouth when coughing or sneezing.
- Open windows for fresh air.
- Wear a mask if you are sick.
- Get tested early.
- Support people on TB treatment.

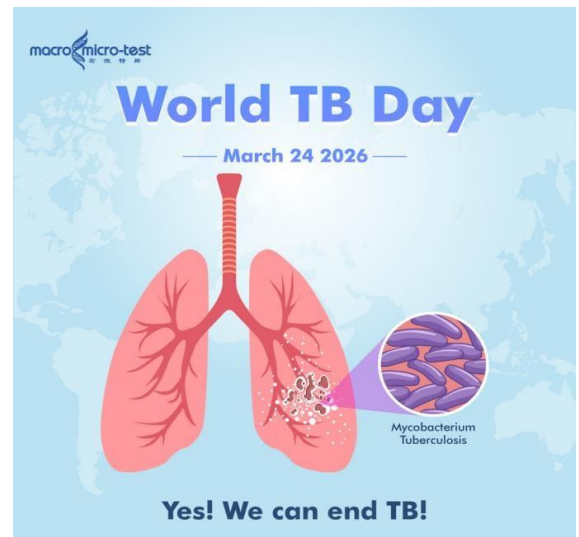
#### *TB signs & symptoms*

Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease that affects the lungs. It spreads through the air when a person with TB coughs, sneezes or talks.

#### Signs and Symptoms:

- Cough lasting more than 2 weeks
- Chest pains
- Weight loss
- Night sweats
- Fever
- Feeling tired or weak

If one experience these symptoms, seek medical help immediately! TB is curable and manageable as long as a person adhere to the treatment plan.



#### *Adherence to TB treatment*

Defaulting TB treatment can make TB come back stronger and become worse. Adherence to treatment helps to:

- Protect family and the community.
- Stop the spread of TB.
- Improve quality of life.

Common challenges to adherence are:

- Forget to take medication.
- Negative side effects.
- Lack of support.
- Stigma or fear.
- Transport or financial difficulties.
- Belief system e.g. traditional healers.

Challenges can be lessen by:

- Set an alarm clock as reminder.
- Take medication on the same time every day.
- Discuss side effects with a health care provider.
- Ask for support from a family member or friend.
- Attend all clinic appointments.