

WORLD TB DAY: COVID-19 & TB



As of today, there are almost 400000 COVID-19 cases recorded globally. With the increase in cases in the global south, many are wondering whether infectious diseases increase the risk of having severe COVID-19? Thus far, diabetes, hypertension and cardiovascular diseases have been highlighted as risk factors for progressing to severe illness ([Fang et al., 2020](#); [Zhou et al., 2020](#)). Recently, published pre-print by [Chen et al., 2020](#), suggests that M.tb infection (Latent Tuberculosis) and TB disease are also potential risk factors for COVID-19 disease and may predispose individuals to severe disease. The main result of the study was:

“MTB infection rate: higher in COVID-19 (36.11%) than bacterial pneumonia (20%; $p=0.0047$) and viral pneumonia patients (16.13%; $p=0.024$). MTB infection more common than other co-morbidities (36.11% vs diabetes: 25%; hypertension: 22.2%; coronary heart disease: 8.33%; COPD: 5.56%). MTB co-infection linked with disease severity (severe/critical 78% vs mild/moderate cases 22%; $p=0.0049$), and rate of disease progression: infection to development of symptoms (MTB+SARS-CoV-2: 6.5 ± 4.2 days vs SARS-CoV-2: 8.9 ± 5.2 days; $p=0.073$); from symptom development to diagnosed as severe (MTB+SARS-CoV-2: 3.4 ± 2.0 days vs SARS-CoV-2: 7.5 ± 0.5 days; $p=0.075$).”

More studies are required to confirm this, as well as to determine which other infectious diseases increase your risk of having severe COVID-19.

Also read [“World TB Day: Together we fight TB and the](#)

[Coronavirus”; COVID-19: Avoiding a ‘second tragedy’ for those with TB](#)

COVID-19 and TB – WTBD Webinar, Tuesday 24 March 2020

COVID-19 Coronavirus and Tuberculosis: We Need A Damage Control Plan



Source: TB-PPM (<https://www.tbppm.org/>)

Watch the [seminar](#) or listen to the [audio](#)

References:

- Chen et al., 2020. [Active or latent tuberculosis increases susceptibility to COVID-19 and disease severity.](#) medRxiv
- Fang et al., 2020. [Are patients with hypertension and diabetes mellitus at increased risk for COVID-19 infection?](#) The Lancet Respiratory Medicine
- Zhou et al., 2020. [Clinical course and risk factors for mortality of adult inpatients with COVID-19 in Wuhan, China: a retrospective cohort study.](#) The Lancet

Disclaimer: Research article by Chen et al., is a pre-print published on [medRxiv](#). At the time of writing this summary, the article had not been peer-reviewed.