

TUBERCULOSIS (TB)

What You Should Know

TB is the second largest global infectious disease killer. Tuberculosis (TB) is the second-leading infectious disease killer globally, killing 1.5 million people in 2020. Nearly all these deaths are preventable with antibiotics.¹ Drug-resistant TB (DR-TB) is a leading cause of death from antimicrobial resistance globally, and only 1 in 3 people with DR-TB have access to care. This proportion is even smaller for those with multidrug-resistant (MDR) or extensively drug-resistant (XDR) TB.²

Negative impacts to TB prevention and care from COVID-19 will continue without increased resources. Many TB clinics and laboratories were temporarily or permanently closed or reassigned to COVID-19

response, leading to over 1 million fewer TB diagnoses and linkages to care in just one year.³ Delayed diagnosis can complicate TB, making it difficult to treat or even fatal.⁴

TB research and development requires more funding. Innovations in TB prevention, diagnosis, and treatment offer significant promise but need increased funding to realize their full benefits. Shorter treatment regimens for latent TB infection, drug-susceptible TB, and DR-TB are increasing cure and survival rates—but many still lack access.⁵ Greater investments are also needed to develop an effective TB vaccine for all ages.⁶

Congressional Calls to Action

Increase funding for U.S. global TB efforts.

Increase funding for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)'s global TB program and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s Division of Global HIV and TB. USAID's presence in countries with the highest global TB burdens saves lives. Their work, in tandem with country programs, allows governments and communities to increase their capacity and resilience to TB.⁷ CDC's focus on countries whose TB epidemics contribute most to cases in the U.S. help keep our communities safe and healthy.

Fulfill the U.S. funding commitment to the Global Fund.

Fully fund the U.S. pledge to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria (GFATM). GFATM is one of the world's largest funders of TB response and helps coordinate between country programs addressing TB and comorbidities, thereby stretching each dollar to save as many lives as possible.⁸

Co-sponsor and pass the End TB Now Act.

This bipartisan legislation directs USAID to boost its bilateral TB programs and activities to account for new goals established by the international community, requiring greater coordination with multilateral partners and support for TB research and development.⁹

Why is this investment important?

Addressing TB will have health and economic benefits. Increased investment in TB prevention and response would reduce suffering, save lives, and increase participation in the global workforce and economy. Access to newer, shorter treatment regimens will also allow people to more quickly secure housing, support their families, and invest in the future.¹⁰

Tools to diagnose and address TB can also be repurposed to address other diseases. These tools can be used in responding to countless other infectious diseases, optimizing investments and helping prepare for future epidemics. TB contact tracing resources,

diagnostic machines, and research networks mobilized quickly in response to COVID-19, saving time and money.¹¹

USAID's impact on TB can be furthered with more investment. USAID's Global Accelerator to End TB has leveraged annual country roadmaps and partnership statements with 20 Ministries of Health in some of the most highly burdened countries to improve program results and sustainability.¹² With sufficient investment, the Accelerator will help reach the updated goals of enrolling millions more people on TB treatment and preventive therapy.¹³

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Resources

S.3386 – End Tuberculosis Now Act of 2021 (117th Congress): <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/3386/text>

Launched: Global Plan to End TB 2023-2030 (Stop TB Partnership, July 2022): <https://www.stoptb.org/news/launched-global-plan-to-end-tb-2023-2030>

Tuberculosis Research Funding Trends 2005 – 2020

(Treatment Action Group, December 2021): <https://www.treatmentactiongroup.org/resources/tbrd-report/tbrd-report-2021/>

The Personal Experience: More than Just a Disease (We Are TB): <https://www.wearetb.com/resume>

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Citations

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2. Ibid.
3. Stop TB Partnership. 12 Months of COVID-19 Eliminated 12 Years of Progress in the Global Fight Against Tuberculosis. March 2021. https://stoptb.org/webadmin/cms/docs/Release%20for%20COVID%20and%20TB%202021%20report%20draft_16%20March_FINAL.pdf
4. World Health Organization. “Global tuberculosis report 2021.” October 2021. <https://www.who.int/publications/item/9789240037021>
5. World Health Organization. “Global tuberculosis report 2021.” October 2021. <https://www.who.int/publications/item/9789240037021>
6. Stop TB Partnership. 12 Months of COVID-19 Eliminated 12 Years of Progress in the Global Fight Against Tuberculosis. March 2021. https://stoptb.org/webadmin/cms/docs/Release%20for%20COVID%20and%20TB%202021%20report%20draft_16%20March_FINAL.pdf
7. The Global Fund. “Tuberculosis.” <https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/tuberculosis/>
8. U.S. Congress. “S.3386 – End Tuberculosis Now Act of 2021.” 117th Congress (2021-2022). <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/3386/text>
9. U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). “Global Accelerator to End TB.” <https://www.usaid.gov/global-health/health-areas/tuberculosis/resources/news-and-updates/global-accelerator-end-tb>
10. World Health Organization. “Global tuberculosis report 2021.” October 2021. <https://www.who.int/publications/item/9789240037021>

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11. Stop TB Partnership. 12 Months of COVID-19 Eliminated 12 Years of Progress in the Global Fight Against Tuberculosis. March 2021. https://stoptb.org/webadmin/cms/docs/Release%20for%20COVID%20and%20TB%202021%20report%20draft_16%20March_FINAL.pdf
12. USAID. “Global Accelerator to End TB.” <https://www.usaid.gov/global-health/health-areas/tuberculosis/resources/news-and-updates/global-accelerator-end-tb>
13. World Health Organization. “Global tuberculosis report 2021.” October 2021. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/978924003702>