

# Prevent Tuberculosis: Management of TB Infection

The Union

 International Union Against  
Tuberculosis and Lung Disease  
*Health solutions for the poor*

## BACKGROUND

Scaling up programmatic management of Tuberculosis (TB) Infection is a critical action to achieve the World Health Organization End TB Strategy targets. About one-third of the world's population has latent TB, which means people have been infected by TB bacteria but are not (yet) ill with the disease and cannot transmit the disease.

## TB Infection

*It is estimated that*

**25%**

*Of the world's population has been infected with TB*

*Annually, **10 million** people develop TB disease, and about **1.5 million** die from it*

WHO TB prevention Fact Sheet 2020

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## THE PROBLEM

It is critical to prevent the development of active disease by providing preventive treatment to those who are at high risk. Systematic diagnosis and treatment of TB Infection is part of the End TB strategy and achieving  $\geq 90\%$  TB infection treatment coverage among people living with HIV and child contacts of TB patients is one of the global priority targets. TB infection management can also contribute to TB elimination, particularly in low TB incidence countries where a large proportion of patients are due to reactivation of latent TB infection.

## THE UNION APPROACH

The Union developed an online course to improve the knowledge regarding all aspects of TB infection care, including diagnosis and treatment with the aim of increasing country-level implementation of TB Infection care among

- i. household contact of people affected by TB, especially under-five-year-old contacts of infectious TB patients,
- ii. persons with risk factors to develop TB, and
- iii. people living with HIV in care,

The course provides the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to start working on a TB preventive treatment programme within the national TB programme.

The online course consists of six modules: introduction to TB; pathogenesis of TB; at-risk populations; identifying TB infection; TB preventive therapy; and, implementation of TB prevention.

The target audience for this course are National TB Programme staff; National AIDS Programme staff; clinicians (specialists, paediatricians, pulmonologist, general practitioners, nurses) working with TB and/or HIV patients and other high risk groups; health care workers at all levels.

## THE RESULTS

The Union's online course is completely **open-access** and can be taken from either desk- or laptop, tablet, or mobile phone via <http://coursesonline.theunion.org>. The course is available in English, French and Spanish.

Over 1,300 distinct users have started the online course with a completion rate of over 80%.