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
Sources:

Immunopaedia.org.za

Watch the [seminar](https://www.tbppm.org/) or listen to the [audio](https://www.tbppm.org/)

References:

- Chen et al., 2020. [Active or latent tuberculosis increases susceptibility to COVID-19 and disease severity](https://www.tbppm.org/), medRxiv
- Fang et al., 2020. [Are patients with hypertension and diabetes mellitus at increased risk for COVID-19 infection?](https://www.tbppm.org/), The Lancet Respiratory Medicine

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 At the time of writing this summary, the article had not been peer-reviewed.