

What is TB?

Tuberculosis (TB) is caused by bacteria called "*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*" and is spread from person to person mainly through air.

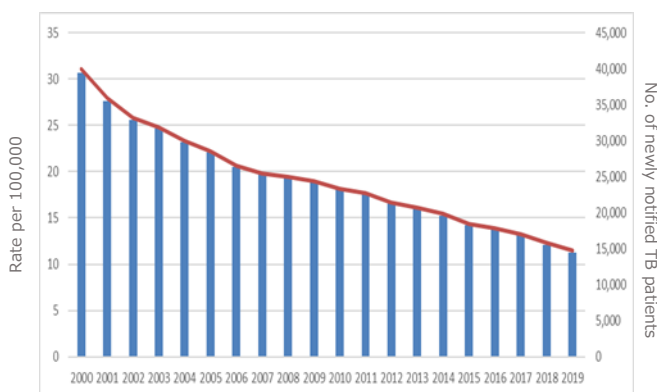
TB usually attacks the lungs, but it can also damage any part of the body, such as the brain, kidneys, or spine. TB is curable and preventable, but a person with TB can die without treatment.

The symptoms of TB disease of the lungs include cough, chest pain, and sputum expectoration with or without blood. The general symptoms of TB disease also include feelings of sickness or weakness, weight loss, fever, and night sweats.

TB in Japan

The most recent data show that a total of 14,460 persons with TB disease were newly notified in Japan in 2019 (11.5 cases per 100,000 population). Both the number of newly notified TB patients and rates per 100,000 have continued to decline (Figure 1). Japan's national target is to reach the notification of below 10 per 100,000 by year 2020 (Figure 1).

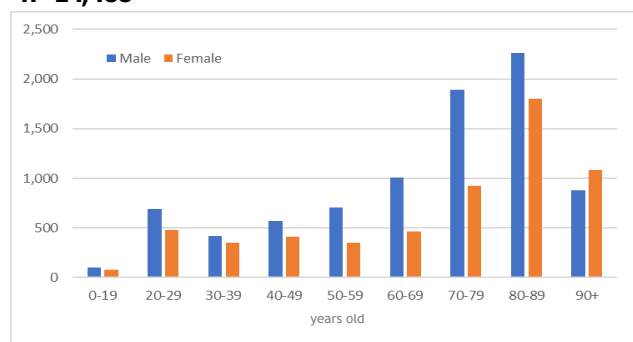
Figure 1. Number and notification rate per 100,000 population, 2000-2019



Sex and age distribution

In 2019, 58.9% of the notified TB patients were males. The largest number of patients were diagnosed among those aged 80 to 89 years old. The number of patients were consistently higher among males than females in all age groups but 90+ years old (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Number of TB patients by age and sex, 2019 n=14,460

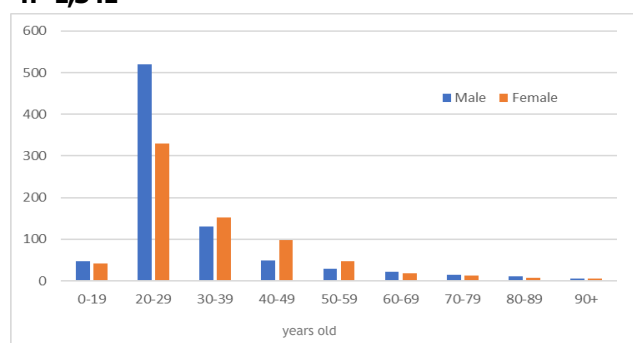


TB among the foreign-born

Information regarding place of birth (Japan-born or foreign-born) was known for 97.6% of the newly notified TB patients (14,108 / 14,460) in 2019. Of those, 10.9% was born outside Japan (n=1,541). Both the number and the proportion of foreign-born patients have continued to increase, however it slightly decreased in 2019.

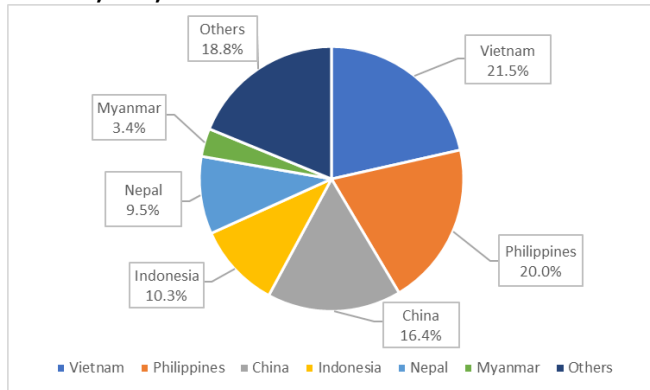
The largest number of foreign-born TB patients were diagnosed among those aged 20 to 29 years old (n=851), followed by those aged 30-39 years old (n=283). The proportion of foreign-born of the total newly notified TB patients was higher among the younger age group, with the proportion reaching 73.5% among those aged 20-29 years old (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Foreign-born TB patients by age and sex, 2019 n=1,541



Vietnam was the most frequent countries of birth for foreign-born TB patients reported in 2019 (n=331), followed by the Philippines (n=308), China (n=253), Indonesia (n=160), Nepal (n=146), and Myanmar (n=53) (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Foreign-born TB proportion by county of birth, 2019, n=1,541



MDR-TB

Multidrug-resistant (MDR) TB is a TB disease that is resistant to at least isoniazid and rifampicin. MDR-TB accounted for 0.6% (45 cases) of all newly notified TB patients in Japan with drug-susceptibility testing completed in 2019 (7,613 cases). The overall number of patients with MDR-TB have remained stable. The number of MDR-TB patients among the foreign-born has slightly increased but the proportion has remained stable.

HIV/TB

HIV is a significant risk factor for TB disease. In 2019, HIV test results were known only for 6.9% (1,004 / 14,460) of the newly notified TB patients. Of those patients with known test results, 29 (2.9%) were HIV positive and 975 (97.1%) were HIV negative.

Latent TB Infection

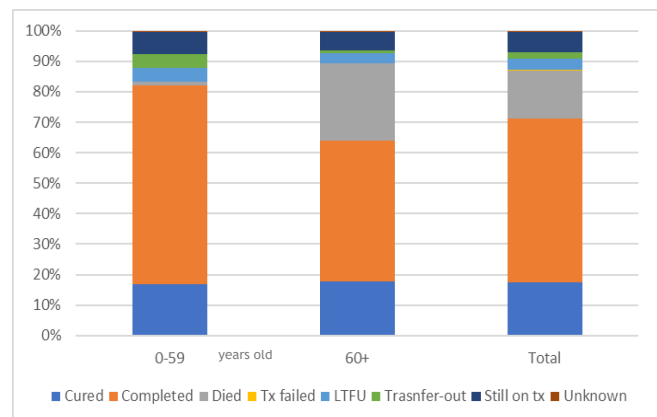
Persons with latent TB infection do not have active TB disease and therefore do not present with any symptoms. About 5 to 10 percent of infected persons without

treatment will develop active TB disease at some time in their lives. A total of 7,684 persons with latent TB infection were newly notified in 2019 in Japan.

Treatment outcome

Treatment of TB disease requires multiple drugs that needs to be taken for six to nine months. Among 15,590 TB patients notified in 2018, treatment outcome was available for 15,527 patients. Among those, 65.6% successfully completed the treatment and 22.4% died during treatment due to any cause. This high mortality rate is due to the high proportion of elderly TB patients in Japan (Figure5). In fact, the 80.5% of patients aged under 60 years old successfully completed the treatment.

Figure 5. Treatment outcomes by age, 2018, n=15,527



All data in the factsheet is based on the statistics published in The Tuberculosis Surveillance Center <http://www.jata.or.jp/rit/ekigaku/en>

The annual report of tuberculosis in Japan in 2020 will be also available soon.

For more information and inquiry, please contact:
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