TUBERCULOSIS FACT SHEET

About TB
- TB is caused by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, which is spread from person to person through the air. (1)
- A person can be infected with TB and not be sick. This is called latent TB infection. An individual with latent TB does not feel sick and does not have any symptoms. People with latent TB cannot pass the infection to another person. (1)
- In certain people, the TB bacteria can overcome immune system defenses and begin to multiply, resulting in progression from latent TB infection to active TB disease. (1)
- About 5 to 10 percent of people infected with TB will develop active TB disease at some time in their lives. (2)
- TB is particularly dangerous for people with compromised immune systems, including people with HIV. (1)
- The general symptoms of active TB disease include unexplained weight loss, loss of appetite, night sweats, fever, fatigue, and chills. (1)
- TB usually affects the lungs, but it can also affect other parts of the body, such as the brain, the kidneys, or the spine. (1)

TB: A Global Perspective
- As many as one-third of the world’s population is infected with TB. (1)
- Each year, nearly 9 million people around the world become sick with TB, causing or contributing to 2 million deaths. (1)
- Although the highest rates per capita are in Africa (28 percent of all TB cases), half of all new cases are in six Asian countries (Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, and the Philippines). (2)
- TB is the leading cause of death of people with HIV/AIDS. (2)

TB in the United States
- 13,299 TB cases were reported in 2007, the lowest number since national reporting began in 1953. (1)
- In 2007, California, New York, Texas, and Florida accounted for 59 percent of the national case total. (1)
- TB caused 644 deaths in 2006, a 46 percent decrease in the last decade. (1)
- The TB rate has been declining in the U.S. each year since 1992. However, progress has slowed in recent years. (1)
- In 2007, 58 percent of TB cases in the U.S. occurred among foreign-born persons. (1)
- Among the various racial and ethnic groups in the U.S., the rate of TB is highest among Asians (26.3 cases per 100,000 persons), followed by Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders (23.0), African-Americans (9.4), Hispanics or Latinos (8.5), American Indians or Alaska Natives (5.9), and Caucasians (1.1). (1)
Drug resistant TB

- Worldwide, about 490,000 new, multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR) TB cases are estimated to occur every year, mostly in China and the countries of the former Soviet Union. Experts believe these numbers are minimal estimates. (2)
- In the U.S., 98 cases of MDR-TB were reported in 2007 (1.1 percent of all U.S. cases). (1)
- As of March 2008, 45 countries — including the U.S. — have confirmed cases of extensively drug-resistant (XDR) TB. (2)
- An estimated 40,000 cases of XDR-TB occur worldwide each year. The true scale of XDR-TB is unknown as many countries lack the necessary equipment and capacity to accurately diagnose it. (2)
- 83 XDR-TB cases were reported in the U.S. between 1993 and 2007. (3)

TB Treatment

- TB is treated with a combination of four drugs — isoniazid, rifampin, pyrazinamide, and ethambutol — for six to nine months. (4)
- Patients with MDR-TB are treated with other antibiotics that are active against TB, including aminoglycosides and fluoroquinolones. (5)
- TB can be difficult to eliminate from the body entirely; in some cases, surgery is needed to remove infected areas of the lung. (4)
- Rifamycins, approved by the FDA in 1971, were the last new drug class to be added as a first-line treatment for TB. (6)

Sources

(1) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
(2) The World Health Organization
(4) The Merck Manual for Healthcare Professionals
(5) National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases