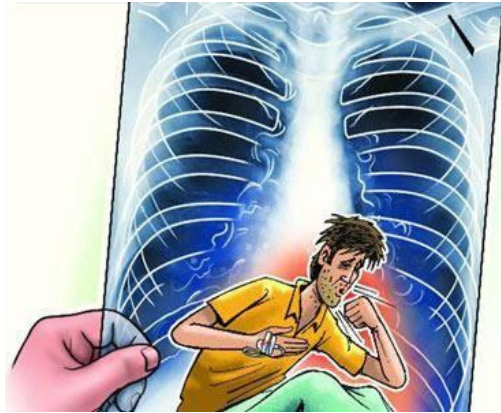


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THE TIMES OF INDIA

Environmental factors contribute to the rise of TB: Study

Jul 18, 2017, 11:31 AM IST



NAVI MUMBAI: Studies have shown that environmental factors have been a major cause in the rise of Tuberculosis (TB) cases. Better health can be achieved with healthier living. Doctors say this is a disease impacted greatly due to a host of environmental factors like personal hygienic with respect to respiratory disease prevention, clean water supply, housing, overcrowding and nutrition.

"In order to increase the environmental quality, the quality of life and health should be improved in cities and upcoming towns. There are about 2-3 million deaths are witnessed because of TB and about 9 million new cases of TB are diagnosed around the world annually," explained Dr Prashant Chhajed, chest physician and pulmonologist, Fortis Vashi.

"Tuberculosis, a contagious infection caused in the lungs is also caused due to a large number of factors to consider such as environmental factors like temperature, humidity and sunlight," he continued. He cautioned that since the disease can take weeks to diagnose, the biggest health challenge is contemplating how to manage the rise of TB cases and improve the environmental conditions.

"Raising awareness will not solve the problem but it can be a stepping stone, but even that is happening on a very low pace. There are precautions that one can take to reduce the risk of infections," opined Dr Suresh Ade, internal medicine specialist. He said that without good ventilation in the room, the TB mycobacteria remain suspended in the air for several more hours than that if the room had good ventilation.

"Proper ventilation will make it better for the patient to recover from this. Following simple rules like covering the mouth and nose will decrease the risk. A strong immunity system helps in killing bacteria 60 per cent of the time," he added.

"Proper care and maintenance of the surrounding and care of the patient helps. People living in congested areas are more prone to airborne infection which can spread from man to man by coughing. People should be aware of the symptoms so they can consult a physician at the earliest thus providing them a chance to treat it," Dr Ade said.