

TUBERCULOSIS AND LUNG DISEASE

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Manifestations of tuberculosis in elderly versus young hospitalized patients in Amritsar, India

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Tuberculosis (TB), known to mankind since ages, is an infectious bacterial disease, caused by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and still remains a major threat to healthcare workers world-wide. Published literature on the clinical characteristics of TB amongst elderly patients in India, as well as globally is scarce; as the problem of geriatric TB has not received the attention, it deserves in the present scenario when world's older population continues to grow at an unprecedented rate. With increasing life expectancy at birth, population aging is a global phenomenon and today 8.5% (617 million) of people worldwide are of geriatric age group and literature projects this figure to jump to nearly 17% (approx 1.60 billion) by 2050. Tuberculosis is well known for its variable presentation and progression in different persons at different age groups, or even in the same person at different occasions & settings, thus often

confusing the clinicians, engaged in its management. India, the second most-populous country on this planet, after China, bears a fifth of the global burden of the disease. Unfortunately, the often neglected research on the issue, with little evidence on which to base practice and make decisions about the extent of investigations and interventions, appropriate for the management of such individuals, fueled the present study to compare the two groups. The conclusions drawn are certainly meaningful and helpful pan-globally in the management of this 'monster disease', with special reference to elderly cases. Undeniably, it will affect the success of TB control program vis-à-vis its eradication drive.

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