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TB case detection during COVID-19 reduces by 25Â·1% in India from 2019: Lancet

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Mumbai-based Dr Zarir F Udwadia co-authored the Lancet report, which highlights on the TB cases in the time of COVID-19



The global tuberculosis burden remains substantial, with more than 10 million people newly ill per year. Dr Zarir F Udwadia, Consultant Chest Physician, PD Hinduja Hospital & MRC, co-authored a Lancet report that aims to review the interactions between COVID-19 and tuberculosis, including the population-level impact of COVID-19 on tuberculosis outcomes.

The paper talks about the clinical presentation and diagnosis of tuberculosis–COVID-19 co-infection, the patient-level impact of COVID-19 on the management and prognosis of tuberculosis, and interventional strategies that could be used to mitigate the devastating effects of COVID-19 on the global burden of tuberculosis, including lessons learned from responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dr Udwadia said, "One of the major setbacks from the COVID-19 pandemic was its impact on tuberculosis control and care, increasing tuberculosis-related deaths. The pandemic has, in a single stroke, wiped out decades of slow but steady progress we were making with global TB control. The pandemic resulted in a significant drop in tuberculosis testing and thereby case notifications. We have lots of ground to cover and it is now imperative to focus on strengthening community-based tuberculosis treatment and community-based active diagnosis. Finally, let us hope TB control can benefit from this pandemic. If we could discover 33 different vaccines for COVID within 2 years surely we can improve on the single, century old, BCG vaccine we use for TB."