

Video Transcript: World TB Day with Dr. Taylor

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Hello, I am Dr. Burnestine Taylor, medical officer for disease control and prevention in the Alabama

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Department of Public Health. I'm pleased to have the opportunity to introduce this information on

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tuberculosis and talk about World TB Day. Each year, this date is a worldwide celebration to

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increase community awareness about tuberculosis. The key message of World TB Day is clear. TB is

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preventable, treatable, and curable with the right care. Early action not only saves lives,

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but can also protect families and communities from further spread.

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I will mention tuberculosis theme, the call to action. While we celebrate on March 24th,

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the number of people who are have been affected by TB in the world, the United States and Alabama,

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the cost of tuberculosis, and more information to come. The theme for this year is yes,

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we can end TB. The theme is different every year and it highlights our urgent need to find out

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early if you have tuberculosis. The theme also is a global or worldwide theme. It's not just

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an Alabama theme. And this theme acts as a call to action for governments, health care providers,

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communities, individuals, states, and

renew their commitment to end tuberculosis.

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Why do we celebrate March 24th? Well, that was the day that Dr. Robert Koch who was a German

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physician and microbiologist discovered the germ that caused tuberculosis and that was in

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1882. 100 years later in 1982 the health community decided to commemorate him and

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honor him every year on that day. So what is tuberculosis? Tuberculosis is caused by

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a germ that affects the lungs usually, but it can also affect other parts of the body,

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the brain, the kidneys, the ovaries, the spine, for example. It can affect multiple parts of the

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body at the same time. And it can be cured with timely and adequate treatment. However,

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delayed or no treatment can cause great sickness and sometimes even death.

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And a lot of people are pretty much surprised that tuberculosis is still around, but it's

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actually very prevalent. In 2024, there were 10.8 million people who developed tuberculosis in the

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world and 1.2 million people died. In 2024, there were 9,615 cases in the United States with 565 TB

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related deaths. In Alabama 2024, there were 90 cases and three deaths. 2025, 89 cases and

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five deaths. Since January 2026, there have been 13 cases and no deaths. So the Alabama numbers

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seem small compared to the global overall numbers,
but we have to remember that our Alabama numbers

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are counted in that worldwide number. At ADPH or
Alabama Department of Public Health, our goal is

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elimination of tuberculosis in Alabama. We provide
testing, treatment, and case management for all

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persons regardless of their ability to pay. That
is our contribution to this worldwide problem.

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It costs a lot of money to treat tuberculosis
and even more when it's left untreated or if

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treatment is delayed. Treatment for per
patient can cost anywhere from \$1,200 to

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\$3,800. And some patients have a very resistant
or very hard to treat case of tuberculosis that

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requires longer treatments and very expensive
medications. It would take about \$5 billion a

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year for the needed research for us to get new
drugs and new treatments to end tuberculosis.

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In Alabama, hospitalization can
cost up to \$14,000 per person.

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So overall, this devastating number of sick
patients, cost of treatment, hospitalization,

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and sometimes the cost of life, all of these
are clear reasons that we need to do our

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part in Alabama to contribute to the overall
global and world goal of ending TB by 2030.

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So, in this series, you will have

more information and more details

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about tuberculosis. You will hear from
a patient's perspective what it's like

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to actually have tuberculosis. How do you get
the diagnosis of tuberculosis? Understand the

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difference between an inactive form of
tuberculosis and an active form

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of tuberculosis. And also understand and
hear more information about tuberculosis

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in children and pediatric and also in
pregnant women. And after tuberculosis,

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sometimes people have lung disease and you
will hear more information about that also.

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So I urge you to stay tuned and get more
information on tuberculosis and understand

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that yes we can hashtag end tuberculosis.
Thank you for your time and attention.