

Excessive Focus to Covid-19 Makes TB Cases Less Discovered


Monday, 29 March 2021 WIB, By: Natasa Adelayanti



The Covid-19 occurrence in this country has made some other diseases less noticed, including Tuberculosis (TB). As a result, the disease treatment becomes neglected. Project Leader Zero TBC Yogyakarta and Lecturer of Faculty of Medicine, Public Health, and Nursing (FKKM) UGM, dr. Rina Triasih, M.Med(Paed), Ph.D, Sp.A (K). revealed that information related to Covid-19 has discovered Tuberculosis (TB) cases decrease significantly. Based on the Ministry of Health data, in 2019, there were 568.987 cases found. However, in 2020 it was only 271.750 cases. The cases should be more or less based on the estimation of around 840.000 cases.

"Almost all resources in either health sectors or others focused on handling Covid-19. This condition has made Tuberculosis (TB) case discovery decrease significantly," she said on Saturday (27/03).

Rina revealed this was a challenge for the government in the upcoming 2030. If some cases are unrevealed, it means the number of Tuberculosis (TB) transmission will continue to increase from time to time, increasing the number of deaths. In fact, Indonesia is currently in the 2nd position with the highest Tuberculosis (TB) cases globally.



A researcher at the UGM Center for Tropical Medicine Studies revealed that there should be an innovative step to eliminate the number of cases by a comprehensive approach (diagnose, treat, and prevent) that the Zero TB program is currently doing in Yogyakarta. Besides treatment, prevention therapy is also necessary. It will be ineffective if we treat it, but we do not prevent it, the number of cases will continue to increase by 2030. There should be collective support from all parties, including active community roles, to prevent the cases even worse.

She also added that since 2006, WHO recommended the prevention therapy to Tuberculosis (TB) for toddlers who have close contact with Tuberculosis (TB) patients and HIV patients. However, Indonesia had not been optimal in implementing it.

Facts about Tuberculosis (TB) are considered an infectious disease caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium Tuberculosis* (TB). The disease is transmitted through the air from the patients' droplets when they are sneezing, coughing, or talking. Tuberculosis (TB) germs are able to survive for several hours in humid and dark environmental conditions. Tuberculosis (TB) could infect everyone of all ages. It attacks various body organs, such as the lungs, kidneys, intestines, and brain. In adults, Tuberculosis symptoms (TB) are recognized by the coughing that lasts for 2-3 weeks, even coughing up blood, unintentional weight loss, tired and lethargic body, and night sweats.

Rina explained that Tuberculosis (TB) was considered one of the top ten deadly diseases globally. In fact, it becomes the top cause of death among single infectious diseases. Nevertheless, Tuberculosis (TB) can be recovered through treatment for six months.

"There has been a cure for Tuberculosis (TB). The government provides it for free to the community. Still, it requires long-term treatment for patients always routinely to take medicine," she explained.

If patients are not disciplined in taking medicine, it can lead them to death. When the disease gets more severe, the Tuberculosis (TB) germs become resistant to the drug. This condition definitely requires more complex and long-term treatment, as well as greater side effects.

"When the germ resists, there will be higher death risks. Hence, the patients should be disciplined in taking their medicine," she revealed.

Author: Ika

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