

**PRESS RELEASE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



International Union Against  
Tuberculosis and Lung Disease  
Health solutions for the poor

**FOR EMBARGOED RELEASE**

Wednesday, 11 October 2017  
16:30 (DST) / 17:30 (EST)

Webcast of the press briefing is available [here](#)

## **48<sup>th</sup> Union World Conference on Lung Health to feature new discoveries and advances in Tuberculosis (TB) diagnosis and treatment**

### **Conference highlights importance of continued investment in TB research and translating science into action**

**(Guadalajara, Mexico)**--More than 2,000 TB professionals from around the world have gathered in Guadalajara for the 48th Union World Conference on Lung Health (WCOLH 2017). The four-day conference is organised by the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union).

The WCOLH 2017 programme includes over 800 scientific abstracts and numerous sessions addressing every aspect of TB advocacy and research. Under the banner of the conference theme, *Accelerating Toward Elimination*, the meeting features studies that shine a light on scientific innovation, technologies that have the potential to transform TB diagnosis and treatment, ongoing work around active case finding and efficacy studies around new drugs.

"We've known for some time now that if we are to eliminate TB by 2030, we are going to need new scientific tools that enhance our capacity to reach, diagnose and treat people living with TB," said José Luis Castro, Executive Director of The Union. "This year's conference is living proof that renewed scientific progress has taken off which is encouraging but, at the same time, that needs to be matched by a political commitment from governments to invest in research and development so that research momentum is maintained."

### **Linking Diabetes with latent TB infection**

Coinciding with World Obesity Day the opening press conference highlighted a study linking diabetes with latent TB infection, the first population-based study to investigate whether there is a relationship between TB infection and diabetes.

A few studies have shown that diabetics with poor glycaemic control (diabetic control) are at especially high-risk to develop disease. Only a few studies have investigated the relationship between diabetes and tuberculosis infection. None of these studies have been population-based and are all in high-risk individuals. No study has assessed the relationship between glycaemic, or diabetic, control and TB infection.

**Leo Martinez of Stanford University** reported that the study was a population-based study of some 4000 individuals in the United States tested for TB infection and several biomarker tests for diabetes. This included 776 diabetics, 1441 prediabetics, and 1998 nondiabetic individuals. The study shows that diabetics had higher rates of TB infection than nondiabetic individuals. It also showed that diabetics with markers of poor diabetic or glycemic control were more likely to have TB infection. For example, undiagnosed diabetics, who often have uncontrolled diabetes, had 12 percent prevalence of TB infection; a rate 3-4 times higher than the general population. Diabetics with high levels of fasting plasma glucose, a biomarker of poor glycemic control also had significantly higher rates of TB infection.

The study concludes that that poorly controlled DM presents a higher risk for latent TB and that this may be a group to target for latent TB testing and consideration of Latent TB therapy.

*Abstract: Promising results for an investigation of Glycemic control and prevalence of latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI): population-based study using HbA1c, fasting plasma glucose and 2hour plasma glucose (OA-124-12), Jalisco Hall, Thursday 12 October 16:00-17.30*

## **ENDS**

Press Programme available: [here](#)

**Please note:** All press conferences will be broadcast live on the [Conference Twitter Feed](#).

Conference Programme: **download the online iPlanner** [here](#)

### **Media Registration:**

Media are strongly encouraged to [register](#) prior to the conference.

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### **[About The International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease \(The Union\)](#)**

The Union is a global scientific organisation with the mission to improve health among people living in poverty. We do that by conducting scientific research, working with governments and other agencies to translate research into better health for people around the world, and delivering projects directly in the field. The Union is made up of a membership body of people around the world who help to advance our mission, and a scientific institute that implements public health projects within countries. For close to 100 years, we have been leaders in the fight against some of the world's biggest killers, including tuberculosis, lung diseases and tobacco use.

### About the World Conference on Lung Health

The Union World Conference on Lung Health is the world's largest gathering of clinicians and public health workers, health programme managers, policymakers, researchers and advocates working to end the suffering caused by lung disease, with a focus specifically on the challenges faced by the low- and middle-income countries. Of the 10 million people who die each year from lung diseases, some 80 percent live in these resource-limited countries.

This year's conference theme, '*Accelerating Toward Elimination*', will centre discussion around the global lung health agenda and the ambitious goals that have been set for the public health community working in lung health. It will focus on how to accelerate toward elimination on multiple fronts: tuberculosis (TB) and co-infections, improving tobacco control and reducing air pollution.