

Tuberculosis (TB) Summary Teaching for Nurses and Patients in Homecare Setting

Overview of Tuberculosis (TB)

TB is an infectious disease caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. It primarily affects the lungs but can also involve other parts of the body. TB is spread through the air when an infectious person coughs, sneezes, or talks.

1. Transmission and Prevention

- **Transmission:** TB spreads via airborne droplets. Close and prolonged contact is typically required for transmission.
- **Preventive Measures:** Use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as masks, especially when working with infectious patients. Educate patients and caregivers on respiratory hygiene such as covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or elbow when coughing or sneezing. Dispose of tissues properly and wash hands frequently.

2. Patient Assessment

- **Signs and Symptoms:** Look for symptoms such as a persistent cough, weight loss, fever, night sweats, and chest pain.
- **Screening:** Regularly screen patients for TB risk factors and symptoms. Ensure that appropriate diagnostic tests (e.g., chest X-rays, sputum tests) are conducted.

3. Infection Control

- **Isolation:** For patients with active TB, implement airborne isolation precautions until they are no longer infectious.
- **Home Environment:** Ensure proper ventilation in the patient's home and advise on reducing close contact with others.

4. Medication Management

- **Adherence:** Monitor and support adherence to the prescribed TB medication regimen, which usually includes multiple drugs taken over several months.
- **Side Effects:** Educate patients on potential side effects and the importance of reporting any adverse reactions promptly.

5. Patient and Caregiver Education

- **TB Disease:** Explain the nature of TB, how it is spread, and the importance of completing the full course of treatment to prevent relapse and transmission.
- **Symptoms Monitoring:** Teach patients and caregivers to monitor and report worsening symptoms or new symptoms promptly.

By following these guidelines, both nurses and patients can work together to manage and prevent the spread of TB effectively in the homecare setting.