

Tuberculosis Incidence and Mortality in Aboriginal Areas of Taiwan, 1997-2001

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摘要

Abstract

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE: People living in aboriginal areas of Taiwan are known to be at especially high risk of developing tuberculosis (TB). This study investigated the incidence and mortality of TB in aboriginal areas of Taiwan. **METHODS:** The TB death statistics and notification data from the National TB Register and Department of Health in 1997-2001 were analyzed. **RESULTS:** From 1997 to 2001, people living in aboriginal areas bore a disproportionate burden of TB disease in Taiwan, with mortality rates 5.5-6.5 times and incidence rates 3.6-5.2 times higher than those of people living in non-aboriginal areas. Among patients with TB living in aboriginal areas, 381 died, accounting for 5.1% of the 7480 TB deaths in Taiwan. A large proportion of the patients with TB who died were older than 65 years, in both aboriginal (40.2%) and non-aboriginal (78.5%) areas; however, the age of TB patients who died in non-aboriginal areas was significantly older ($p < 0.001$). TB patients living in the aboriginal areas accounted for 3.6% (2618/71,447) of the total number of reported TB patients in Taiwan, and 32.7% were in the age range from 24-45 years. In contrast, TB patients living in non-aboriginal areas were typically older, with only 20.1% in the 24-45 age range ($p < 0.001$) and 44.4% older than 65 years ($p < 0.001$). In terms of incidence and mortality rates, men predominated in both groups; however, this pattern was less prominent in aboriginal areas than in non-aboriginal areas. **CONCLUSIONS:** The mortality rates and incidence of TB in aboriginal areas are much higher than those in non-aboriginal areas in Taiwan. Concentration of resources and programs to control TB in aboriginal areas may represent the most effective use of resources for fighting TB.