

Tuberculosis: case study

Business



Mrs. Q. is a patient who has been diagnosed with an HIV infection for the past 5 years. During this time, she has been working as a receptionist at an insurance agency. Although HIV is a contagious disease, it cannot be contracted by touching someone, or by sitting next to them. Mrs.

Q. has gotten a test done for tuberculin, and it has come back positive. Since this is a very contagious disease, she has chosen to share the results of this test with her office manager because of the risks that she could cause for the other co-workers or customers. Tuberculosis is an infectious disease that affects mainly the lungs, but can still affect all areas of the body. If this disease, *Mycobacterium Tuberculosis*, is left untreated, the results could lead to death.

The vocational implications of Ms. Q results in a positive TB test can be treated, but can eventually affect her employment status. For most individuals, including Ms. Q's co-workers and customers, the body's immune system would likely suppress the disease. It would be necessary however to anyone who had been in close contact with Ms. Q.

to be made aware, if she in fact had active TB. Active tuberculosis is actually much less frequent than a tuberculosis infection. With that being said, Ms. Q. would not have been infectious to others unless she had active tuberculosis that had gone untreated. When a healthy immune system is doing its job, TB can lay dormant for years.

However, because this disease can be contracted through the air by breathing in droplets expressed when infected individuals cough, it is imperative that those individuals in close contact with Ms. Q. be given the

skin test to ensure they have not had a positive reaction to the bacteria. This is especially true in this case, if the disease was active and went unrecognized, and considering that Ms. Q.

was not isolated during a possible active period of the infection. Whether the disease is active or latent plays a crucial role in determining what steps need to be taken in her case vocationally, socially, and medically. Both will yield a positive result on the skin test, but an active infection will generally lead to coughing, weight loss, and fever in those infected, can be detected by chest x-ray, and as previously mentioned, and is transmissible. It is important to note however, that even while there is a 90% chance that the immune system will suppress the disease in those who come in contact with it, there is still a chance that a positive reaction can eventually become active, leading to brain, kidney, pine, or lung damage. Essentially for Ms.

Q. and her weakened immune system, in order to prevent an active infection, treatment will be needed. Additionally, in Ms. Q's case, this disease is particularly dangerous, and would be dangerous to any other immunosuppressed individual who may have become exposed to the bacteria. This underscores the importance of screening and preventative therapy in order to prevent possible progression of the disease.

Worldwide, TB has become the leading cause of death among persons infected with HIV and an estimated one third of all individuals living with HIV are also infected with TB". Vocationally speaking, Ms. Q. will need to be removed from her work environment if she has an active TB infection, until she has treatment. If Ms.

Q. was diagnosed with active TB, she is infectious to others and will likely be treated anywhere from nine to twelve months . During her treatment she will also need to take precautions with her family and any other people she is in close contact with. If she is in the active period of the disease, she will in fact have no social life, she will need to be isolated because this disease is spread through the air. At the very least, if Ms. Q's TB is active, she will likely not be able to work for several weeks while she is being treated.

It will also be necessary that she continue to be tested for TB periodically. Although Ms. Q is HIV positive, the tuberculosis is treatable. With symptoms that lie dormant for a period of time, there is always the possibility of the disease becoming active again. Also, because of Ms.

Q's pre-existing condition, she is very susceptible to contracting any disease.
? References: American Academy of Family Physicians Retrieved January 14, 2012