

UPDATE ON THE TUBERCULOSIS SITUATION IN SINGAPORE

MOH was notified of 1,565 new cases of TB among Singapore residents¹ in 2018, which is slightly higher than the 1,536 cases in 2017. Correspondingly, the incidence rate was 39.2 cases per 100,000 population in 2018, compared to 38.7 cases per 100,000 in 2017.

Most of the cases (81.3%) among Singapore residents were Singapore-born. Older age groups and males continue to make up a significant proportion of the new cases. Of the 1,565 new cases notified in 2018, 1,130 (72.2%) were 50 years old and above, and 1,057 (67.5%) were males.

There were 127 relapsed cases among Singapore residents, of which 111 (87.4%) were Singapore-born.

The emergence of MDRTB remains a serious public health challenge. In 2018, Singapore had four new cases of MDRTB (2 Singapore-born and 2 foreign-born residents). The number of such cases must be kept low despite a higher regional prevalence of MDRTB, through strong emphasis on treatment compliance under the national TB control programme.

Please refer to Tables 1, 2 and 3 for the detailed statistics.

Table 1
Number of cases and distribution of tuberculosis infection by site, Singapore residents¹ 2009 – 2018

Year	New Cases		
	Lung	Other Sites	Total
2009	1,205	237	1,442
2010	1,265	213	1,478
2011	1,309	224	1,533
2012	1,359	201	1,560
2013	1,249	171	1,420
2014	1,220	234	1,454
2015	1,271	227	1,498
2016	1,353	264	1,617
2017	1,302	234	1,536
2018	1,324	241	1,565

¹ Residents refer to Singaporeans and Permanent Residents

Table 2
Distribution of TB cases by age group and country of birth,
Singapore residents, 2018

Age (Years)	2018 new cases				2018 relapsed cases			
	S'pore-born	Foreign born	unknown	total	S'pore-born	Foreign born	unknown	total
0 – 9	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
10 – 19	33	1	0	34	0	0	0	0
20 – 29	74	13	0	87	2	0	0	2
30 – 39	70	57	1	128	3	5	0	8
40 – 49	139	46	0	185	6	2	0	8
50 – 59	306	45	2	353	33	3	0	36
60 – 69	320	44	2	366	25	0	0	25
70 +	329	80	2	411	42	6	0	48
Total	1,272	286	7	1,565	111	16	0	127

Table 3
Ethnic-gender distribution of reported tuberculosis (new case)
Singapore residents, 2018

Ethnic group	Male	Female	Total (%)
Chinese	756	314	1,070 (68.4)
Malay	209	111	320 (20.4)
Indian	64	40	104 (6.7)
Others	28	43	71 (4.5)
Total	1,057	508	1,565 (100.0)