



TUBERCULOSIS

The White Plague!



by Miriam Aronin

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Contents

Something Really Bad	4
A Giant Hole.....	6
A Mysterious Disease.....	8
Crisis in the Cities	10
An Amazing Discovery	12
Fresh Air and Sunshine.....	14
Life in a Sanatorium	16
New Medicines, New Hope	18
A Global Emergency.....	20
Even Worse News	22
Isolated!.....	24
The Ones We Really Fear	26
 Famous Tuberculosis Outbreaks	 28
Tuberculosis Facts	29
Glossary	30
Bibliography.....	31
Read More.....	31
Learn More Online	31
Index	32
About the Author	32



Something Really Bad

In the fall of 2007, Oswaldo Juarez (oz-WAWL-doh HWAHR-ez), a 19-year-old student in Florida, fell ill. For more than two weeks, he suffered from a hacking cough and high fevers.

Then one night, Oswaldo felt so bad that he thought he might be dying. His chest ached. He had so much trouble breathing that he couldn't sleep. Around 4:00 A.M., he ran to his bathroom. There, he coughed up blood into the sink. That was the moment he knew he had “something really bad,” he said.

Oswaldo
Juarez



Oswaldo came to the United States from Peru, a country in South America, to study English.

Oswaldo rushed to see a doctor. The doctor did tests and gave him the terrible news. Oswaldo had **pulmonary tuberculosis**, or TB—a disease that attacks a person's lungs and can be deadly if not treated. Doctors believe Oswaldo caught TB in his home country before he left for Florida.

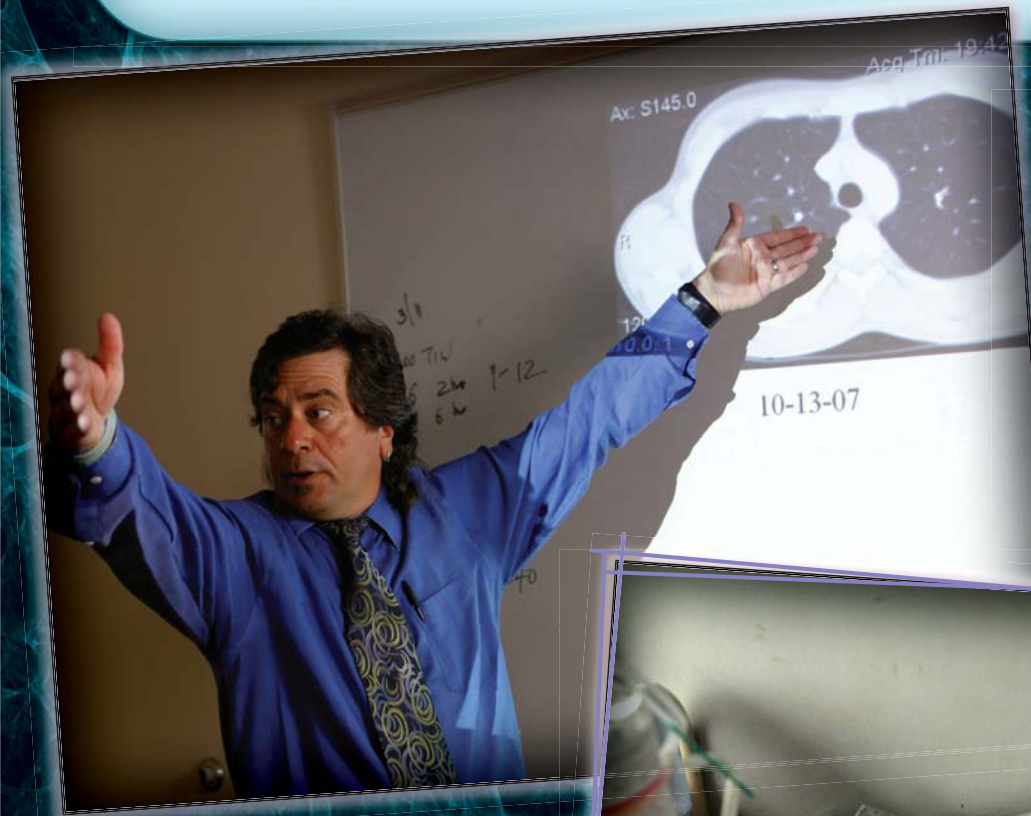


A health care worker checks on a TB patient.

Tuberculosis usually affects the lungs. However, it can also affect other parts of the body such as the brain, the kidneys, or the spine.

A Giant Hole

Doctors took **X-rays** and found that tuberculosis had torn into Oswaldo's right lung. There was a large hole, about the size of a golf ball, where lung **tissue** used to be. This kind of lung damage brings on horrible symptoms. For example, TB patients have trouble breathing. They often have long-lasting coughs, fever, chills, weight loss, and chest pain.

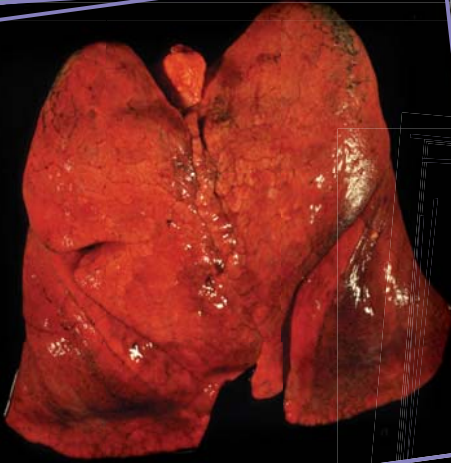


Dr. David Ashkin, an expert on TB, is shown here with a CT scan of Oswaldo's lungs. CT scans, which are a series of X-rays, can show lung damage caused by tuberculosis.

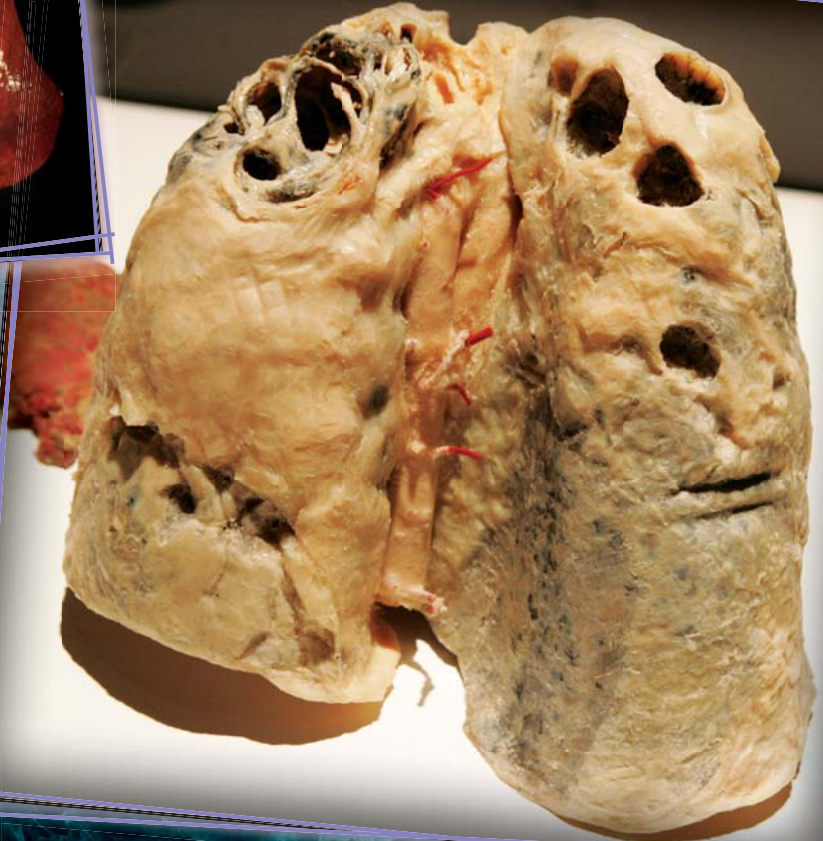


A nurse caring for a TB patient

Without treatment, tuberculosis attacks more and more of a patient's lung tissue. Eventually, he or she can no longer breathe and will die. To save his lungs and his life, doctors gave Oswaldo medicines called **antibiotics**. Unfortunately, none of the medicines his doctors tried at first worked.



Healthy lungs



When a TB patient's lungs become damaged, **blood vessels** in the lungs can break open. Then the patient may start coughing up blood, just like Oswaldo did.

These lungs were infected with TB. It can take months or even years for the disease to cause a hole, such as the one in Oswaldo's lung, to develop. Many people who have TB don't always feel sick at first, so they don't know that they have the disease until it's so far advanced that it has caused harm to their bodies.

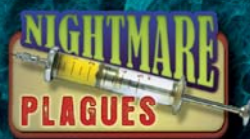
Index

- active tuberculosis 20, 22, 29
- Adirondack Mountains 14–15, 16
- AIDS 20
- antibiotics 7, 18–19, 22, 24, 29
- Ashkin, Dr. David 6, 26
- bacteria 12–13, 14–15, 17, 18–19, 20, 28
- blood 4, 7, 9, 10–11, 25
- cities 10–11, 28
- consumption 9
- coughing 4, 6–7, 10–11, 13, 24, 29
- extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis (XDR-TB) 23, 29
- extremely drug-resistant tuberculosis (XXDR-TB) 24–25
- factories 10
- Hippocrates 8, 28
- Juarez, Oswaldo 4–5, 6–7, 8, 24–25, 26
- Koch, Dr. Robert 12–13, 14, 28
- latent tuberculosis 20–21, 29
- lungs 5, 6–7, 13, 25, 29
- Marten, Dr. Benjamin 28
- microscope 12, 28–29
- multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) 22–23, 29
- rabbits 15, 16
- Russia 26
- sanatoriums 16–17, 18
- South Africa 26–27
- Sweetser, Dr. William 11
- tenements 10, 13
- tests 5, 16, 29
- tissue 6–7
- Trudeau, Dr. Edward Livingston 14–15, 16
- vaccine 27
- white plague 9, 27
- World Health Organization (WHO) 21, 23, 24, 29
- X-rays 6

About the Author

Miriam Aronin is a writer and editor. She also enjoys reading, dancing, and staying healthy.

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TUBERCULOSIS

The White Plague!

Oswaldo Juarez, a 19-year-old student in Florida, had been feeling ill for a few weeks. Then, on a fall night in 2007, he began to cough up blood. As he looked at the red stain in his sink, he thought he might be dying. He raced to a doctor to have tests done to find out what was wrong with him. Then came the terrible news. Oswaldo had tuberculosis, or TB—a disease that kills more than one million people on Earth every year.

How does this killer disease spread to so many people? Look inside to find out more about Oswaldo and other victims of tuberculosis. You'll also discover what causes the dangerous illness, how it affects the body, and—most important—how to protect yourself from it in the first place.

Bubonic Plague
The Black Death!

The Flu of 1918
Millions Dead Worldwide!

Malaria
Super Killer!

Smallpox
Is It Over?

Tuberculosis
The White Plague!

Typhoid Fever
Dirty Food, Dirty Water!

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