

WHO recommends rapid test for extensively resistant tuberculosis

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On 12 May 2016 the WHO published a recommendation for the rapid tuberculosis test from the company Hain Lifescience GmbH. This facilitates faster detection of resistant TB pathogens, and timely, individual adjustment of patients' medication. It also increases the chances of successful treatment.

(Photo: <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20160525/372137>)

Tuberculosis (TB) remains a widespread disease. The current tuberculosis report of the World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that almost ten million people contracted the disease in 2014. A total of 1.5 million people died from TB that same year. This is partly due to antibiotic-resistant strains which have developed in TB over time. According to the WHO, approx. 5% of all cases involve a multiresistant type of TB (MDR-TB). Certainly the two most important first-line drugs (rifampicin und isoniazid) are ineffective against these TB pathogens. In these cases, second-line drugs are used. This treatment is often less effective, takes a very long time, and has significantly more side-effects. Moreover, even these drugs no longer work on some TB pathogens. This is called extensively resistant TB, or XDR-TB. To prevent incorrect treatments and a further increase in resistance, the WHO has now recommended a rapid test for the detection of XDR-TB. Because the results are available after only a few hours, instead of several weeks as with conventional tests, treatment can be adjusted immediately. This increases the effectiveness of the therapy and reduces treatment costs as well as the risk of developing further antibiotic resistance. It also increases the chances of successful treatment. "We are very proud that the WHO has recommended our test. In 2008, they already endorsed our MDR-TB test. With this type of innovative diagnostics, we want to do our part in the fight against tuberculosis," says David Hain, the managing director of Hain Lifescience.

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