

## Symptoms of Pulmonary Tuberculosis

These depend on two factors:

1. The local effect of the disease. These are cough, sputum, hæmoptysis, pleurisy and pain.
2. Symptoms caused by a very virulent poison produced by the germs and distributed by way of the blood stream over the body, i.e., lassitude, loss of weight, loss of appetite, dyspepsia, lack of nerve tone, rapid pulse and temperature, wasting of muscle.

Cough may or may not be present in early disease of the lungs. At first the tubercles are in the lung tissue, and do not communicate with the bronchi. Any sputum at this time is merely an increase in the normal secretion of the bronchi later, when the tubercle communicates with a bronchiole, we get true infective sputum.

The dry cough is often caused by irritation in the lungs of a nerve, the vagus.

Blood-spitting or hæmoptysis may occur very early in the disease. It is then due to the rupture of very small blood vessels, and is as a rule small in amount, varying from blood-stained sputum up to a few ounces of blood.

Later, when the disease had advanced to cavity formation, the hæmorrhage is usually due to the rupture of a large blood vessel. As the lung tissue breaks down and is discharged from the cavity a vein or an artery may be left unsupported, thus allowing the walls to stretch and an aneurism or dilatation of the vessel occurs. On this bursting a very severe hæmoptysis may occur.

Pleurisy, when not associated with any other disease, is practically always tuberculous in origin. It may be of a dry type or fluid may form. At first a sharp stitch-like pain is present on taking a deep inspiration. When fluid forms the pain lessens. Various pains referred to the upper part of the chest and shoulders sometimes occur.

The symptoms due to the tubercular poison are of paramount importance, as they occur very early in the disease, and their diminution is a sign of improvement.

Lassitude is often the first indication that the patient's health is below par. That "tired feeling" is not always due to tuberculosis, but when an ordinary energetic person finds that together with this feeling there is a loss of weight, then he or she should certainly seek medical advice.

Indigestion due to the poison affecting the digestive apparatus is very often complained of. Under suitable treatment for tuberculosis this usually clears up.

Temperature and rapid pulse rate give us an indication of the toxæmia. Very little will cause the temperature of a tuberculosis patient to rise, i.e., excitement, over-exercise, etc.

Besides the above, the toxins cause the wasting of the muscles, especially on the infected side of the chest. Naturally with this wasting there is weakness as well.

### PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS TREATMENT.

We can enumerate many measures for combating the disease, but one and all have for their object the raising of the patient's power of resistance, thus preventing further spread of the disease, and ultimately to bring about healing the lesion. The tubercle bacillus digs itself well in, in the tissue of the lung, and it is therefore safe from any antiseptic drugs given either by mouth or inhalation. Moreover, it is surrounded by a layer of fat which makes it resistant to weak antiseptics.

It is not so many years ago that consumption was looked upon as a most deadly disease—in fact, as a hopeless disease. Night air was bad, colds and draughts were most dangerous, so the poor consumptive was confined to a room with practically all fresh air excluded, and he gradually drifted downhill to his grave. Occasionally someone defied these rules, and to the surprise of all his friends began to improve. These cases were noted, and gradually what was known as the "Open-Air treatment" came into vogue. It was left to a German—Otto Walther—to realise what might be done