TUBERCULOSIS: AN EIGHT YEAR (2000-2007) RETROSPECTIVE STUDY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA MEDICAL CENTRE (UMMC), KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

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Abstract. This was an eight year (2000-2007) retrospective study of tuberculosis in patients admitted to the UMMC. A total of 131 cases were analyzed. Malays constituted the most cases, (43%), followed by Chinese (22%), Indians (17%) and others (18%). The majority of cases were within the 21-60 year old age group, which constituted 69.5% of the total. Males were more commonly affected (65%). Most cases were reported among Malaysians (83%). The majority of patients were unemployed (39%), followed by housewives (10%), laborers (9%), students (8%), shop assistants (7%), and other occupations (27%). The most common presenting complaints were prolonged productive cough, night sweats, fever, anorexia, weight loss (57%), hemoptysis (34%), and undifferentiated symptoms, such as prolonged diarrhea and dysphagia (9%). Sputum was positive for acid-fast bacilli (AFB) in 89%, but only 69% of cases had abnormal chest radiographs. The majority of patients (65%) developed no complications. The most common complications were pleural effusion, pneumothorax and pulmonary fibrosis. The majority of patients (82%) suffered either from diabetes mellitus, hypertension, ischemic heart disease or all 3 conditions. Regarding risk factors for tuberculosis, two were HIV positive and two were intravenous drug users. The majority of the patients (85%) did not complain of any side effects from their anti-tuberculosis treatment. Among those who did complain of side effects, the most common were nausea and vomiting (41%), drug induced hepatitis (37%), blurring of vision (11%) and skin rashes (11%). Two cases of death were reported.

Key words: tuberculosis, retrospective study, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Tuberculosis (TB) is caused by bacteria belonging to the Mycobacterium tuberculosis complex. The disease usually affects the lungs, although in up to one third of cases other organs are also involved. In 1995, it was estimated 8.8 million cases of TB occurred worldwide, 95% (5.5 million) of them in developing countries of Asia, Africa (1.5 million), the Middle East (745,000) and Latin America (600,000). It is also estimated that nearly 3 million deaths from TB occurred in 1995, 98% of them in developing countries. In 1995 in the United States, 22,813 cases of TB (8.7