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| **254 DEPRESSION IS COMMON IN TB PATIENTS AND IS ASSOCIATED WITH TREATMENT ABANDONMENT** |  |
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| **Purpose of Study:** Tuberculosis (TB) is associated with poverty, stigma and marginalization, which are risk factors for psycho-morbidity, but little is known about the mental health of TB patients. We therefore studied interactions between TB, depression, socio-demographic factors and TB treatment adherence among the urban poor. |  |
| **Methods Used:** Over 7 years, patients with newly diagnosed or recurrent TB and randomly selected healthy controls from shantytowns in Lima were evaluated in a case control study and the patients were then followed-up to determine their treatment outcome. Each participant provided demographic and socio-economic data and completed a Beck Depression Inventory (II). Depression scores were adjusted for overlap with the physical symptoms of TB. Poverty was assessed with a composite socio-economic index. Data were analyzed with linear and logistic regressions. |  |
| **Summary of Results:** TB patients (n=1,734) had frequent depression (53%), severe depression (15%) and suicidal ideation (4.7%). Depression was more common and depression scores were higher than in randomly selected healthy members of the same community (n=470; both P<0.005), independently of poverty, education and other cofactors. For TB patients, higher depression scores were independently associated with female gender, poverty, incomplete schooling, illicit drug use, perceived discrimination and longer delay in seeking medical care for TB symptoms (all P<0.01). Furthermore, a prior history or current episode of treatment abandonment was significantly related to current depressive state (OR 1.8, P<0.001) |  |
| **Conclusions:** Depression was highly prevalent among newly diagnosed TB patients and especially associated with prior treatment abandonment. TB programs may optimize disease control, treatment adherence and quality of life by diagnosing and addressing the mental health issues that affect TB patients. |  |