

# 70,000 children dying every year from tuberculosis: WHO

21 March 2012

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As many as 70,000 children are dying every year from tuberculosis, as the curable disease often goes unnoticed due to a failure by health workers to recognise the symptoms, the WHO said Wednesday.

"Often TB is undiagnosed in children... because the symptoms in children are not very specific," said Malgosia Grzemska, coordinator at the World Health Organization's Stop TB department.

Unlike adults who often cough incessantly when infected with the disease, "children may not even cough, but may just be less playful, they may be lethargic," said Grzemska.

The UN health agency's expert said that ensuring screening of TB for all children in households with infected adults would help to detect cases early.

Children living in households with TB who are found not ill should be given [preventive therapy](#) while those infected should be treated early, she said, adding that about half a million babies and children contract the disease annually.

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