

Chagas Disease

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Chagas Disease Latest News

World Chagas Disease Day is observed every year on April 14 to raise awareness around the disease, and the impact it has on lives.

About Chagas Disease

- Chagas disease, also known as **American trypanosomiasis**, is an **inflammatory, infectious disease** caused by the **protozoan parasite, Trypanosoma cruzi**.
- It is an illness that can **cause serious heart and stomach problems**.
- It is the result of a complex health problem typical of **neglected tropical diseases** and socially- and environmentally-determined diseases.
- It is **named after Carlos Chagas**, a **Brazilian** physician and researcher who on 14 April **1909 diagnosed the disease in a person for the first time**.

Chagas Disease Transmission

- The most common way people are infected with Chagas is through the **blood-sucking triatomine bugs**.
- This **parasite is found in the feces of the triatomine bug**.
- These **bugs** also are **called reduviid**. They may also be known as **“kissing bugs”** because they **tend to bite people’s faces**.
- The parasite can also be **transmitted from mother to child during pregnancy or childbirth, through contaminated food** and beverages, **blood transfusions**, organ **transplants**, or laboratory accidents.
- **Once a person has the infection**, they **remain infected for decades**, often with no signs or symptoms of illness.
- Chagas disease is **common in South America, Central America, and Mexico**, the primary home of the triatomine bug.

Chagas Disease Symptoms

- **Few people have symptoms at first**. But **over time, parasites can move to your tissues and cause chronic infections**, leading to **heart and digestive tract damage**.
- **Left untreated**, Chagas disease later can cause **serious heart and digestive problems**.

Chagas Disease Prevention

- There is **no vaccine** to prevent Chagas disease.
- **Vector control, reducing interaction** between humans and vector insects, has been the most effective method of prevention.
- **Blood screening** is necessary to prevent infection through congenital transmission, transfusion, and organ transplantation.

Chagas Disease Treatment

- During the **first phase** of infection, **treatment** of Chagas disease **aims to kill the parasite**.
- **Later**, it’s **no longer possible to kill the parasite**. **Treatment** in this later phase is **about managing symptoms**.

Source: **HAM**

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/chagas-disease/>

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