

Anyone can get TB – BUT it can be beaten

AND HERE'S SOME TESTIMONIES...

Dr Victor Ramathesele

Medical Doctor and HouseCall Presenter

I was diagnosed with Pulmonary TB in 1985 as a final year medical student. Probably contracting the disease while seeing patients, I battled to comply with the 9 months treatment but managed to complete my studies.

I contracted TB again in 1995, this time I was running a busy practice in Tembisa, and traveling the continent as Team Doctor of Bafana Bafana.

Thanks to excellent services from the South African Public Sector, *I survived both episodes to tell the tale.*



Ms Gerry Elsdon

Businesswoman, MC & TV Personality

People on TV don't have perfect lives. At the height of my television career in 2001 in South Africa, I was diagnosed with tuberculosis. At the time I thought TB was a thing of the past but when I realised it was sitting in my womb, I needed to know more! And I discovered I was not alone in my ignorance. I have realised that even though I was about to fully recover from the disease, I could not ignore the plight of the thousands of South Africans affected by TB. Because they are not celebrities, people are far more affected by stigma and discrimination. TB is not sexy so no one wants to talk about it. TB sufferers believe they have no voice, so I will shout for them. TB took my womb but not my voice or my heart. *Get tested, Be a leader to end TB!*



Prince Nhlanganiso Zulu

Son of the King of the Zulu

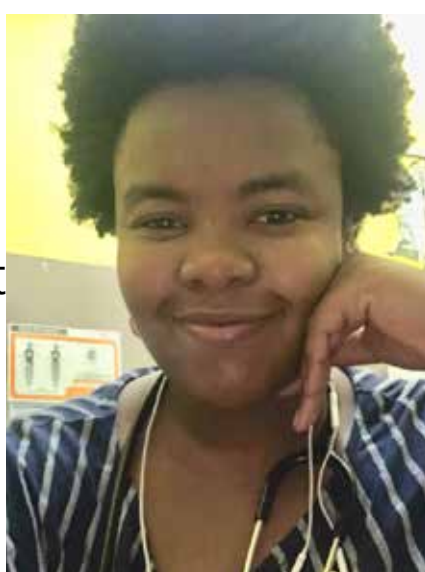
TB overpowered the tight security in the Zulu palace in 2010 when I was diagnosed. This was a clear demonstration that the disease did not care about family status. TB left my body with irreparable damage as I lost my right lung. I spent three full months in bed at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli Hospital, unable to breathe. My breathing level was at 15%. TB treatment normally takes six months, but mine took 9 months due to a collapsed lung which later had to be removed. With his Majesty King Goodwill Zwelithini sitting by my bedside, I realized that being from a royal family was any opportunity to bring awareness to others. I appeal to people to regularly check their health status. *TB is curable bafwethu!*



Dr Zolelwa Sifumba

Medical Doctor: KwaZulu-Natal

I contracted TB while I was doing clinical rotations in hospitals in Cape Town when I was a medical student at the University of Cape Town. In October 2012, I was diagnosed with Multidrug-resistant Tuberculosis. Going through 18-24 a month of treatment was a nightmare for me. I had to endure 21 pills a day for 18 months and 6 months of daily injections that left my buttocks black and blue. Fortunately, 18 months later I pulled through and now share my story all over the world in the hope that it will educate many and motivate people to protect themselves and their loved ones from TB and support loved ones suffering from it. *I'm proof that TB can be beaten!*



Mr Thabo Pelesane

Civil Servant and Community Activist

I'm thankful to the South African Health System to be alive because TB can be prevented and cured yet it can be fatal if left unattended.

I was first diagnosed in 1989 at the age of 13, but was determined to stay positive. My first visit to the hospital was soon after I started experiencing symptoms such as violent coughing and night sweats.

In the early years, I often neglected by health and didn't take my medication as prescribed and so contracted TB multiple times.

I finally received a clean bill of health because of my adherence to TB treatment, it really saved my life.

I am proof that TB is not a death sentence!



Ms Tamaryn Green

Reigning Miss South Africa

I was diagnosed with TB in June 2015 and started treatment immediately but suffered in silence for fear of being stigmatized. As my symptoms worsened and the side effects of my medications took hold, I became despondent. But there is always hope. A trusted lecturer introduced me to a specialist at Groote Schuur. My medication changed. My life changed. My perception on patient care changed. And I am ready to change a life. And so I'm telling my story and through my #BreakTheStigma campaign, I aim to raise awareness that TB is curable, and action needs to be taken if we are to achieve the global goal of ending the disease by 2035. I am now TB Free.

Lets Break the Stigma, Lets Beat TB!

