



Screening to detect TB among high-risks groups improves health outcomes for people with TB and reduces transmission 27 March 2019, Damascus, Syria □ 35-year-old Kawthar is one of the tens of thousands of Syrians who fled intense fighting in Afrin city, north-west Syria last year. She and her family now live in a camp for displaced persons in northern rural Aleppo. In late 2018, a team from the World Health Organization visited the camp to screen people suspected of having tuberculosis (TB). Kawthar was one of several people confirmed as having the disease.

Kawthar was pregnant when she was first diagnosed. She refused to take her medicines because she was worried that they might harm her unborn baby. Health care workers explained to her that her condition was life-threatening and, if left untreated, would only get worse. Kawthar agreed, with some trepidation, to undergo the lengthy treatment for the sake of her family.

Kawthar could not leave her camp without authorization and could not afford the cost of travelling to the TB treatment centre, located some distance away. Throughout her pregnancy, WHO staff delivered medicines and food to the camp to help her get through her treatment. WHO-supported teams in the camp followed her case closely, encouraging her to adhere to her treatment plan. Thanks to these efforts, Kawthar has regained her health and is now nearing the end of her treatment.

“WHO continues to support national efforts to combat this deadly disease through improving access to TB health care services in Syria, delivering equipment and medicines to health care facilities that treat TB patients, and training health care staff on diagnosing and managing TB,” said Ms. Elizabeth Hoff, WHO representative in Syria.

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Sunday 28th of April 2024 01:01:41 AM