

CHAGAS: SILENT KILLER



Chagas disease is a **neglected tropical disease** caused by the *Trypanosoma cruzi* parasite.

It is spread mostly by insects known as Triatominae, or **kissing bugs**.

If left untreated, Chagas can cause **serious problems to the heart and digestive system**.

1
The *kissing bug* (also known as *vinchuca*, *barbeiro*, *pito*, *chinche*, *chipo*) carries the parasite

2
The bug hides in the walls and under the roofs of mud and straw shacks

3
It bites people in their sleep and defecates close to the bite, causing them to contract the disease

4
The parasitic infection can also be transmitted by:

- contaminated food
- blood transfusions and organ transplants
- mother to child transmission

Acute phase (2 months)
Mild or no symptoms

Chronic asymptomatic phase (10-30 years)
No symptoms

Chronic clinical phase
1 in 3 infected people develop heart and digestive system problems, which may lead to **death**

6-7M

people affected worldwide



Only

1 OUT OF 10



are diagnosed

75 MILLION

people live at risk of contracting Chagas in Latin America

Once entirely confined to Latin America, Chagas has since spread to other continents as a result of migration

12,000

people die each year from this disease



CONTROL & PREVENTION

Spray houses and surrounding areas with insecticides to eliminate the bugs



Screen blood and organ donors



Screen all pregnant women and children of infected mothers



TREATMENT



Recommended for:

- All infants with congenital infection
- All adults during the early chronic phase
- All women of childbearing age

During the late chronic phase, additional lifelong medical treatment and surgery are usually indicated.