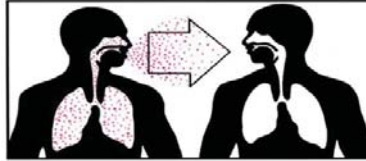


## TB ELIMINATION: INTERFERON-GAMMA RELEASE ASSAYS (IGRAs) - BLOOD TESTS FOR TB INFECTION

### Q: What are IGRAs?

**A:** Interferon-Gamma Release Assays (IGRAs) are blood tests that can determine if a person has been infected with TB bacteria. An IGRA test measures how strong a person's immune system reacts to TB bacteria by testing the person's blood in a laboratory.



### Q: How do they work?

**A:** Blood is collected into special tubes using a needle. The blood is delivered to the laboratory and the results are reported to your health care provider.

### Q: What does a positive or negative IGRA test result mean?

**A:** A positive IGRA test means the person has been infected with TB bacteria. Additional tests are needed to determine if the person has TB infection or TB disease. A health care provider will then provide treatment as needed. A negative IGRA test means the person's blood did not react to the test and that latent TB infection or TB disease is not likely.

### Q: Who can receive an IGRA test?

**A:** Anyone can have an IGRA test instead of a TB skin test (TST). A person should have either a TST or an IGRA test, but not both. There are rare exceptions when results from both tests may be useful in deciding whether a person has been infected with TB. Your health care provider can decide when having both tests might be useful.

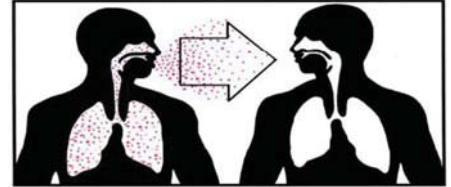
### Q: How often can an IGRA test be given?

**A:** There is no problem with repeated IGRA tests.

## TB SKIN TEST (MANTOUX):WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

**Q: What is the TB Skin Test?**

**A:** The tuberculosis (TB) skin test, sometimes called a “Mantoux,” is a simple, harmless way to find out if you have latent TB infection.



**Q: What is latent TB infection?**

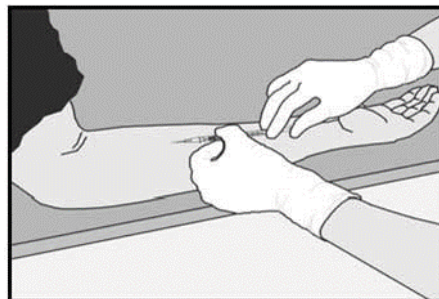
**A:** There are two phases of TB. Both phases can be treated with medicine. When TB germs first enter your body, they cause latent (silent) TB infection. You will have no symptoms with latent infection. Without treatment, latent TB infection can become active TB disease. Anyone can get TB because it spreads from one person to another through the air.

Phase 1 – Latent TB Infection	Phase 2 – Active TB Disease
TB germs are “asleep” in your body. This phase can last for a long time (even many years).	TB germs are active and spreading. They are damaging tissue in your body. TB disease usually affects the lungs but it may affect other organs.
You don’t look or feel sick. Your chest x-ray is usually normal.	You usually feel sick. Your doctor will do special tests to find where TB is harming your body.
You can’t spread TB to other people.	If the TB germs are in your lungs, you can spread TB to other people by coughing, sneezing, talking, or singing.
Usually treated by taking 1 or 2 medicines for 3 to 9 months.	Treated with 4 medicines for at least 2 months, then usually 2 medicines for at least another 4 months.

**Q: How can I tell if I have latent TB infection?**

**A:** A TB skin test (“Mantoux”) can show if you have latent TB infection. You could have latent TB infection if you have ever spent time close to someone with active TB disease (even if you didn’t know they were sick).

Your nurse will use a small needle to inject some harmless testing fluid (called “tuberculin”) under the skin on your arm.



**Your nurse MUST check your arm 2 or 3 days after the TB skin test even if your arm looks OK to you.**

If you have a reaction to the test, it will look like a raised bump. Your nurse will measure the size of the reaction. If there is a bump, it will go away in a few weeks.

**TB SKIN TEST (MANTOUX): WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW (CONT.)**

**Q: How do I take care of my arm after the TB skin test?**

- A:**
- Don't cover the spot with a bandage or tape.
  - Be careful not to rub it or scratch it.
  - If the spot itches, put a cold cloth on it.
  - You can wash your arm and dry it gently.

**Q: What if my TB skin test is negative?**

**A:** The test is "negative" if there is no bump (or only a very small bump) at the spot where the fluid was injected. Sometimes the site will appear red, however the nurse does not count redness as "positive." Only the raised, hardened bump will be measured and counted. A negative TB skin test usually means that you don't have TB infection or disease. In some situations, you may need to have another TB skin test later.

**Q: What if my TB skin test is positive?**

**A:** The test is "positive" if there is a bump of a certain size where the fluid was injected. This means you probably have TB germs in your body. Most people with a positive TB skin test have latent TB infection. To be sure, your doctor will examine you and give you a chest x-ray. You may need other tests to see if you have active TB disease.

**Q: You should have a TB skin test if you:**

- A:**
- Work or live in a prison, nursing home, clinic, hospital, homeless shelter;
  - Have had frequent close contact with someone who has active TB disease;
  - Have lived in a country where many people have TB; or
  - Have HIV infection or certain other health problems.

**Q: What if I've had BCG vaccine?**

- A:**
- Even if you have had BCG vaccine, you can have a TB skin test.
  - People who have had BCG vaccine still can get latent TB infection and active TB disease.
  - BCG vaccine may help protect young children from getting very sick with TB. This protection goes away as people get older.
  - BCG vaccine may sometimes cause a positive TB skin test reaction. However, if you have a positive reaction to the TB skin test, it probably is from TB germs in your body - not from your BCG vaccine.