

The Tuberculosis Skin Test

Administration

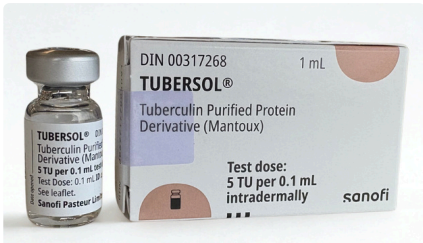
Provide Patient education and locate the injection site

1 Prepare client and supplies

- Advise client to wait 15 min. after injection and to return in 48-72 hours for test read.
- Use inner part of the forearm about 10 cm below the elbow.
- Ensure the injection site is free of muscle margins, heavy hair, veins, sores, or scars.

2 Load syringe

- Withdraw 0.1 ml from vial using a 1 ml Tuberculin safety syringe.



Tubersol®: Protect from light. Store between +2° to +8° C. Use opened vials within 30 days. Discard open vial if no date is noted.

3 Inject tuberculin

- Hold the skin taut and position the needle bevel up, almost flat against the skin.
- Insert the needle at a 5-15° angle just until the entire bevel is under the skin.
- As you slowly inject Tubersol, a 6-10 mm diameter wheal should form. If no wheal appears, the test should be repeated at a different site on opposite forearm or at least 5 cm from previous test site.
- Do not cover test site with band aid.



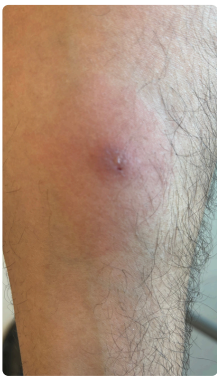
Source: CDC Public Health Image Library

Reading

All TB skin tests must be read by a trained healthcare professional in person.

1 Inspect the site

- Read the TB skin test between 48 and 72 hours after administration.
- Only the induration (a hard, dense raised formation) is measured, even if there is soft swelling or redness.



2 Palpate induration

- Lightly sweep fingertips over the surface to find margins or edges of induration.

3 Mark induration

- Push the tip of a ballpoint pen at a 45° angle toward the site of injection. The tip will stop at the edge of the induration. Mark both sides.
- Only the induration (a hard, dense raised formation) is measured, even if there is soft swelling or redness.



4 Measure induration

- Using a flexible millimeter (mm) ruler, measure the diameter across from left to right (not up and down).
- Do not measure redness.



5 Record measurement of induration in mm

- Record the size of induration in mm. No induration is 0 mm.
- Any blistering or other reaction should be noted.

Interpretation

Skin test interpretation depends on two factors:

1. Measurement in millimeters (mm) of the induration
2. Person's risk factors for TB

Induration of ≥ 5 mm is considered positive in:

- People living with HIV
- Close contacts of an active contagious case in last 2 years
- Individuals with abnormal chest x-ray with fibronodular disease
- Stage 4 or 5 chronic kidney disease
- Prior to:
 - Organ transplantation
 - Receipt of biologic drugs
 - Receipt of other immunosuppressive drugs

Induration of ≥ 10 mm is considered positive in:

- All others

Clinical decision making

- Provide client with a copy of their results.

IF POSITIVE:

1. Order chest x-ray.
2. Advise client to not repeat TST in the future.
3. Assess client for symptoms of TB. If active TB disease is suspected, please call the TB clinic at 519-829-8370.
4. Positive TB skin tests are reportable to Public Health. Complete and send the Positive TB Skin Test (TST) Reporting Form to WDG Public Health along with the chest x-ray report.
5. Based off risk assessment, client may also be referred to the TB clinic for further assessment and testing using the TST reporting form.

Medications used to treat active or latent TB are provided free of charge through Public Health.

TB skin tests can be booked at all WDGPH locations.
Please call 1-800-265-7293 ext. 7006 for an appointment.

For more information, visit wdgpublichealth.ca/TB