

Tuberculin Skin Testing (TST, Mantoux Skin Test, Mantoux Test)

Fact Sheet

What is a Tuberculin Skin Test?

- A tuberculin skin test is done to see if a person has been exposed to tuberculosis (TB).
- If the person has been exposed to the TB bacteria (*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*), their skin will react to the injected solution by developing a firm red bump at the site (induration) within 2 or 3 days.

How is a TST done?

The TST is a 2-part test:

- **Appointment 1:** a very fine needle injects a small amount of liquid just under the skin on the inside of the forearm. Although there is very little risk, you will be asked to stay in the waiting room for 15 minutes after the test to ensure there is no allergic reaction. You may get a temporary raised area where the needle was given. This is normal. If this area becomes itchy, do not scratch it and leave it uncovered.
- **Appointment 2:** after 48-72 hours you will go back to have your test read. The nurse will assess the reaction to the TST. The test results are measured in reaction size (mm of induration). If there is a reaction, this does not indicate the presence of active tuberculosis disease. A positive tuberculin test reaction will need further evaluation with other diagnostic procedures such as a chest x-ray.
- If you require a two-step TST, this process will be repeated in 7 to 28 days.

How is TB spread?

- TB bacteria are put into the air when a person with TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs, sneezes, speaks or sings.
- People with TB are most likely to spread the germs to people they spend a lot of time with every day, such as household or family members.

Why should I get a TST?

- TB infection can usually be identified with a TST two to eight weeks following exposure to TB bacteria.
- A TST can contribute to early identification of TB infections and thus safeguard the health of the employee, their families, their co-workers and their patients, residents or clients.

Who should get a TST?

- At the start of employment, tuberculin skin testing is required for all Southern Health–Santé Sud health care workers who have direct client contact or whose role requires them to enter client care areas to fulfill the duties of their position.

Who should not have a TST?

- Those with a known history of a positive TST.
- Those who have received previous treatment for active TB.
- Those who have received previous preventative treatment for TB.

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- Those with a current major viral infection.
- Those who have received a live virus immunization (e.g. MMR, Varicella) within the past 4 weeks. **(Note:** The TST may be administered before or even on the same day as live virus vaccines, at a different site).
- Those with an **allergy** or hypersensitivity to Tubersol® or any components of the formulation or container. Important nonmedicinal ingredients include Polysorbate 80 and Phenol.
- Those with a history of a severe reaction (necrosis, blistering, anaphylactic shock or ulceration) to a previous TST.
- Those with extensive burns or eczema.
- Those taking corticosteroids (≥ 15 mg of prednisone/day for 2 weeks) or immunosuppressive drugs.

What are the possible side-effects of a TST?

- A reaction (induration) at the injection site may occur and will be measured at the follow up appointment.
- Pain/discomfort, redness, bruising, rash, or itchiness at the injection site.
- These side effects usually go away within a few days.
- Rarely – injection site scar (as the result of a strongly positive reaction), blistering, allergic reaction.
- Report any adverse reaction beyond expected side effects to **Manitoba Health Links** (1-888-315-9257) or a health care provider.

After receiving a TST:

- Remain in the clinic for a 15-minute observation after TST.
- Do not cover the injection site with a bandage.
- Do not press or scratch injection area.
- Do not to apply creams or lotions to the injection site.
- You can perform all normal activities including showering or bathing.
- Ice may be used on the injection site to relieve itch. Do not apply an ice pack directly to bare skin. Cover area with a towel and then apply an ice pack if needed.

Tuberculin Skin Test Appointments			
Location:		Check applicable box	
Date	Time	For Test Administration	To Read Test

References:

Health PEI (2016). Tuberculin Skin Test (TST). Retrieved August 30, 2021 from [Tuberculin Skin Test \(TST\) Fact Sheet | Government of Prince Edward Island](#)

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Sanofi Pasteur (2015). [Product Monograph](#): TUBERSOL® Tuberculin Purified Protein Derivative (Mantoux).

Southern Health-Santé Sud (2016). [Administration of Tuberculin Skin Test \(TST\)](#). CLI.8011.PL.003.

Southern Health-Santé Sud (2021). [Southern Health-Santé Sud Occupational Safety & Health Standard Orders](#). CLI.8011.PL.008.SD.02