



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

CDC 24/7: Saving lives, protecting people, reducing health costs

Fact Sheets

(PDF  (skintesting.pdf) - 53k)

[Español \(skintesting_es.htm\)](#)

Tuberculin Skin Testing

What is it?

The **Mantoux tuberculin skin test (TST)** is the standard method of determining whether a person is infected with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. Reliable administration and reading of the TST requires standardization of procedures, training, supervision, and practice.

How is the TST Administered?

The TST is performed by injecting 0.1 ml of tuberculin purified protein derivative (PPD) into the inner surface of the forearm. The injection should be made with a tuberculin syringe, with the needle bevel facing upward. The TST is an intradermal injection. When placed correctly, the injection should produce a pale elevation of the skin (a wheal) 6 to 10 mm in diameter.

How is the TST Read?

The skin test reaction should be read between 48 and 72 hours after administration. A patient who does not return within 72 hours will need to be rescheduled for another skin test.

The reaction should be measured in millimeters of the induration (palpable, raised, hardened area or swelling). The reader should not measure erythema (redness). The diameter of the indurated area should be measured across the forearm (perpendicular to the long axis).

How Are TST Reactions Interpreted?

Skin test interpretation depends on two factors:

- Measurement in millimeters of the induration
- Person’s risk of being infected with TB and of progression to disease if infected

Classification of the Tuberculin Skin Test Reaction

<p>An induration of 5 or more millimeters is considered positive in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -HIV-infected persons -A recent contact of a person with TB disease -Persons with fibrotic changes on chest radiograph consistent with prior TB -Patients with organ transplants 	<p>An induration of 10 or more millimeters is considered positive in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Recent immigrants (< 5 years) from high-prevalence countries -Injection drug users -Residents and employees of high-risk congregate settings 	<p>An induration of 15 or more millimeters is considered positive in any person, including persons with no known risk factors for TB. However, targeted skin testing programs should only be conducted among high-risk groups.</p>
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