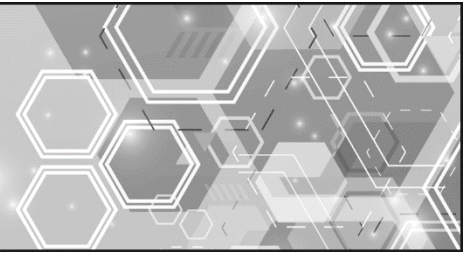




Durham Region Health Department Facts about...



Tuberculin Skin Test (TST)

What is it?

- The Tuberculin Skin Test (TST) will tell you if you have been infected with TB germs
- A TST is not a vaccine
- A TST requires two visits with a healthcare provider
- On the first visit, a very small amount (0.1ml) of tuberculin purified protein derivative (PPD) solution is injected just under the skin on the forearm to perform a TST
- A tiny raised bump (“wheal” or “bleb”) will appear where the PPD has been injected, which soon fades away
- On the second visit, the TST must be checked 48-72 hours after the PPD has been injected
- The injection site will be examined and “read” by a trained health care provider to determine if the test is negative or positive
- If this TST is not read by 48-72 hours, the test results will not be reliable and will need to be repeated
- If you have been informed by the Health Department that you have been in contact with a person who has TB disease you may require two series of TST
- The TST will **NOT** give you TB.

What if my TB skin test is positive?

- The TB skin test results depend on the size of the raised, hard area or swelling on your forearm

Positive skin test: This means the person’s body was infected with TB germ. It does not necessarily mean the person has TB disease or that the person is sick.

If you have a positive result, you will be referred to your health care provider for further assessment which may include a chest x-ray and medication to prevent TB disease.

Negative skin test: This means the person’s body did not react to the TB skin test and that they are likely not infected with the TB germ.

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Are there side effects with a TST?

- Swelling or redness at the site
- Slight itching
- Severe blistering which is very rare

The Health Department recommends that persons wait in a designated area 15 minutes after the TST to make sure no reaction occurs.

Who should get a TST?

People who might get a TB skin test are:

- People who are identified contacts of active TB
- People with a medical condition or who take medication that affects their immune system (e.g. HIV or diabetes)
- People born in other countries or travellers from areas with high rates of TB
- Staff, volunteer or residents of health care facilities, homeless shelters, or correctional facilities
- People who live or work in Indigenous communities with high rates of TB

Who should NOT get a TST?

The following people should **NOT** get a TST:

- Those with symptoms of TB disease (such as fever, weight loss, cough, night sweats, fatigue)
- Those who have had a previous positive TST result
- Those who had history of TB infection or TB disease in the past
- Those who have had severe blistering reactions (very rare) from a TST or those with extensive burns or eczema on their forearms
- Those who are ill with major viral infections (not a common cold)
- Those who have received measles, mumps, rubella, varicella (chickenpox), oral polio and yellow fever immunization in the past 4 weeks; defer for 4 weeks
- Those who have had an anaphylactic or other allergic reaction to a previous TST test
- Those who have a severe allergy (anaphylaxis) to a previous dose of any vaccine(s)
- Those who have allergies to any of the following components of Tubersol® :
 - Purified protein derivative (PPD) of *M. tuberculosis*
 - Phenol
 - Polysorbate 80 (Tween 80)

Your record of protection

Keep a record of your TB skin test. A positive TST is never to be repeated as the test results will always remain positive and there may be an increased reaction at the injection site.

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