PROCEDURE FOR

THE MANTOUX TUBERCULIN SKIN TEST

Tuberculin skin testing is the standard method of identifying persons infected with tuberculosis. The intradermal Mantoux tuberculin skin test (TST)—not a multiple puncture test—can be used to determine if tuberculosis infection has occurred.

The Mantoux TST is performed by the intradermal injection of 0.1 mL of tuberculin Purified Protein Derivative (PPD) containing 5 TU (tuberculin units) into either the volar (flexor) or dorsal surface of the forearm (the volar area preferred). The injection should be made about 4 inches below the elbow, with a disposable **tuberculin** syringe, just beneath the surface of the skin, with the needle bevel facing upward, to produce a discrete, pale elevation of the skin (a wheal) 6 mm. to 10 mm. in diameter. A one-quarter-to one-half-inch, 27-gauge needle should be used.

A TST can be administered to individuals of any age who are at increased risk for acquiring latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI) or active TB disease, even to newborn infants.

Standard precautions pertaining to blood exposure and prevention of needle stick injuries should be employed.

The Mantoux TST should be read 48 to 72 hours after the injection. However, if the patient fails to show up for the scheduled reading, positive reactions may still be measurable up to one week after testing. If, however, the delayed reading after 72 hours is negative, any reaction may have waned, and the TST will need to be repeated immediately and read within 48 to 72 hours. The TST reading should be based on measurement of induration, not erythema, using a Mantoux skin test ruler. The diameter of induration should be measured transversely to the long axis of the forearm and recorded in millimeters. Record no induration as zero (0) millimeters.

A negative TST result does not exclude LTBI or active TB disease.

**Measure TSTs Transversely**

\* ATS, Diagnostic Standards and Classification of Tuberculosis in Adults and Children.   
Am. J. Respir. Crit. Care Med., 4/00, pages 1388-1389 <http://ajrccm.atsjournals.org/cgi/content/full/161/4/1376>

<https://www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/factsheets/testing/skintesting.htm>