



# TUBERCULOSIS (TB) SKIN TEST MANTOUX TEST

## Before the test

Tell the nurse if you:

- Have been treated for TB disease or TB infection in the past.
- Have had a positive TB skin test. If you have, you should bring proof of the test results.
- Are taking corticosteroids or immunosuppressive agents.
- Have received any shots within the past 4 weeks (e.g., oral polio, yellow fever, MMR, BCG, oral cholera, oral typhoid, or chicken pox).

### *You should know...*

*TB skin testing is safe for pregnant women.  
BCG vaccine is not a contraindication for the test.*

## During the TB skin test

1. The nurse will inject a small amount of fluid called tuberculin, just under the skin of your forearm. A small bubble will form at the injection site. This is not an immunization.
2. In 48 hours (2 days) the nurse will look at the test spot and feel for a reaction. If a bump is felt it will be measured. Only reactions of a certain size are considered positive.

## After the test

1. You must remain in the waiting room for 15 minutes after the test.
2. The bubble should go away in 15 to 30 minutes.
3. Don't cover the site with a cotton ball or a bandage.
4. You can resume normal activities. It's alright to get the site wet (e.g., swim, shower, or bathe).

## Reactions you may have at the test site

- Red or swollen skin. This usually goes away in a few days.
- Pain, discomfort, or itchiness. Don't scratch it. Use a cold cloth on the site.
- An open sore or blister that may scar. This is rare.

NOTE: With any vaccine or drug, there's a very small chance that a serious allergic reaction or death could occur.

Reference:

Canadian Tuberculosis Standards, 6th Edition, 2007; Sanofi Pasteur Limited, product monograph, product information sheet, September, 2005

## WHAT IS... Tuberculosis?

Tuberculosis or TB is an infectious disease caused by the bacteria mycobacterium tuberculosis.

The disease most commonly occurs in the lungs (infectious TB Disease). The bacteria can also travel through the blood stream or lymph nodes to any organ in the body such as the brain, kidney or bone (noninfectious TB Disease).

### Why is TB skin testing important?

The TB skin test determines if you've been exposed to the TB bacteria. Early diagnosis of TB can help control the spread of the disease.