

Your Tuberculosis (TB) Test Results

Why are your test results important to keep?



Why do we screen new employees for TB?

Tuberculosis (TB) screening is required for facility licensing including home care. The employees of healthcare settings are screened for TB before they work with residents or clients. The goals of screening are to 1) rapidly identify and refer for treatment those with active TB (sick/may infect others) and 2) diagnose and prioritize for treatment those with latent TB infection (not sick/cannot infect others).

What does the screening include?

Your TB risk history: prior diagnosis of TB or latent TB infection (LTBI), presence of an immune-suppressing condition that could affect interpretation of test results, prior receipt of Bacille Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine (which can cause a false positive skin test), residing for greater than two months in a TB endemic country, or having close contact with someone who has had infectious TB disease since your last test.

Signs and Symptoms of active TB: persistent cough for three weeks or more, chest pain or shortness of breath, unexplained weight loss, night sweats, hemoptysis, fatigue, poor appetite, fever or chills. Other symptoms may be present depending on site of disease.

A TB test: a single IGRA (interferon gamma release assay) blood test or a two-step TST (Mantoux tuberculin skin test). If you ever had an adverse reaction to a TST or are concerned that past BCG vaccine will interfere with a TST, you should receive an IGRA.

What happens if my test is positive?

Employers cover the costs of required work screenings (TB test, chest x-ray). Anyone with a positive TB test will need to receive a chest x-ray (CXR). If the CXR is negative, you may begin resident or client cares. Employers are not responsible for further costs. If you are symptomatic or have an abnormal chest x-ray, you will need to follow up with a provider to rule out active TB. Remember, if you are diagnosed with latent TB infection, treatment can reduce the risk of future progression to active TB.

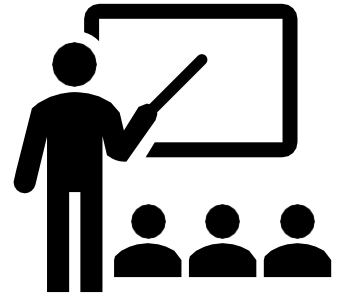
What if I tested positive in the past?

Keep your test results! If you have documentation of a past positive test, you do not need to be retested. If you also have a negative chest x-ray report that is dated either 90 days prior to the date of your positive test or dated anytime after the date of your positive test, you will not need a new chest x-ray. All employees with a baseline positive TB test will receive an annual symptom screen unless you provide verification of TB or LTBI treatment completion.



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What if I just had a test completed?

Keep your results and let your employer know you have them!

The Minnesota Department of Health and their partners in care are working to increase portability of TB testing results to reduce unnecessary and duplicate testing of Health Care Workers, but it will take all of us to meet this goal.

Any time you are screened and receive a TB test or chest x-ray report by an employer (or for a school program), it is your responsibility to keep record of those test results. If you do not receive the test results, ask for them. They are your health care information and, even if you did not pay for the test, you should be given record of the results.

Keep your test results somewhere safe and have it available to any new employers when you start a new position where it is required. Negative TB test results are valid for a limited period of time so always keep the most recent result. Positive TB test results do not expire, so keep those and all corresponding chest x-rays.

What if I lose my test results?

Contact your previous employer to obtain records of your last TB results. If you request the employer to send the results directly to a new employer, they may require you to sign a consent form before they will release those results.

If a clinic did the testing, you may also request a copy of your medical record from that clinic.

Resources

More information about TB is available on the Minnesota Department of Health website:

www.health.mn.gov/tb

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**Thank You
Health
Care
Workers!**

