



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Mantoux test

Information for patients

TB Service: 0118 322 6882

This leaflet is for people having a Mantoux test (Tuberculin skin test) – a screening tool for tuberculosis (TB).

What does the test involve?

The test involves injecting a small amount of a substance, called tuberculin, into the outer skin layer of the forearm. The area on the arm is looked at 2-3 days later to assess what type of reaction has taken place.

Advice after the test

- Do not scratch the area; leave it open to the air or wear loose fitting clothes and do not cover it with a plaster.
- Do not put any creams or lotions on the area that might change the reaction.
- You may wash and bathe as normal.
- If the area is red or itchy, you may use a cold wet cloth to soothe the area but do not use any steroid cream until you are seen in clinic.

What happens next?

- It is very important to attend for your follow up appointment, as the result must be read within 48-72 hours. **Failure to do so may mean that a repeat test is necessary.**

This test is currently unlicensed in the UK but is used extensively throughout Europe. This means that the doctors and nurses believe that this test works well to screen for TB and NICE (National Institute for Clinical Excellence) recommend its use.

Are there any possible side effects of the test?

Affecting more than 1/100 people:

- Irritation or discomfort at the site, immediately after the injection.

Affecting less than 1/100 people:

- Headache, fever, enlargement of regional lymph node.

Affecting less than 1/1,000 people:

- Anaphylactic (allergic) reactions, hypersensitivity to tuberculin can cause vesiculation (air pockets beneath the skin) and skin necrosis (death of skin cells).

Further advice:

If you are experiencing problems with the Mantoux test site, please ring the TB Service on 0118 322 6882.

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

Respiratory Medicine, November 2023.

Next review due: November 2025