

Mantoux test

About the test

The Mantoux test is used to identify a present or past tuberculosis (TB) infection. It may also be positive if you have had a BCG vaccination (BCG is the vaccine used to prevent tuberculosis) at some time. The test is commonly used to determine who needs to have a BCG vaccination. The test is performed by injecting tuberculin just under the surface of the skin of the mid-forearm.

In Canterbury, the test is performed by Canterbury Health Laboratories, in 1 of 3 locations:

- Burwood Hospital, BCG clinic, on a Tuesday by appointment. You need to return the following Friday to have the test read.
- Christchurch Hospital Outpatients Building, 2 Oxford Tce, between 8 am and 4 pm, no appointment needed. You need to return 2 to 4 days later to have the test read.
- Ashburton Hospital, on a Monday. You need to return the following Wednesday to have the test read.

You can check the Canterbury Health Laboratories opening hours by phoning **0800-THE-LAB (0800-843-522)** or visiting www.bloodtest.co.nz.

You should not have the test if you have eczema or skin rashes, if you are known to have current active tuberculosis or if you are immunosuppressed. This will be discussed prior to any testing being carried out.

Your reaction to the tuberculin may be depressed if you have a viral infection (measles, mumps, rubella or influenza) or have recently been vaccinated against a viral infection.

Procedure

- 1) You will be asked several questions about your medical history.
- 2) A small amount of tuberculin will be injected just under the surface of the skin of your forearm.
- 3) You will be asked to remain on-site for 20 minutes in case you have an adverse reaction to the tuberculin. Reactions are rare, but not unknown.
- 4) The injection site may become itchy, red and swollen. Please do not put a dressing on it, scratch it or treat it with any creams or medication. A cold wet flannel placed gently over the site may relieve any irritation.
- 5) You will need to return to the Canterbury Health Laboratories location to have the test read.

Based on a Southern Community Laboratories patient information sheet. Adapted by HealthInfo clinical advisers. Last reviewed June 2024.