

# Mantoux test

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## 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 only performed by Canterbury Health Laboratories, on the corner of Tuam St and Hagley Ave, opposite Christchurch Hospital.

You can check the Canterbury Health Laboratories opening hours by phoning **0800-THE-LAB (0800-843-522)** or visiting [www.bloodtest.co.nz](http://www.bloodtest.co.nz). Although this website has information about the hospital-based Canterbury Health Laboratories and community-based Canterbury Southern Community Laboratories, please note that Canterbury Southern Community Laboratories does not perform the test.

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, 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 to have the test read after three days. Although this is the best time for reading the Mantoux test, it can be read any time from two to four days after the injection if necessary.

*Based on a Southern Community Laboratories patient information sheet. Adapted by HealthInfo clinical advisers. Updated September 2017.*