

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've 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. 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 doesn't perform the test.

You shouldn't have the test if you have eczema or skin rashes, if you're known to have current active tuberculosis or if you're 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'll 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'll 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 don't 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'll 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. Last reviewed July 2021.