

How is two-step tuberculin skin testing done?

The two-step tuberculin skin test (TST) is used to detect individuals with past tuberculosis (TB) infection who now have diminished skin test reactivity. This procedure will reduce the likelihood that a boosted reaction is later interpreted as a new infection.

Who should receive a two-step TST?

The two-step TST should be completed by applicants/students who:

- have never been tested; or
- have no documentation of prior testing; or
- do not remember being tested; or
- tested negative over 12 months ago.

Appointment schedule for two-step testing

Visit 1, day 1

- The first TST is given to the applicant/student and he/she is told to return in 48 to 72 hours for the test to be read.

Visit 2, day 2 - 3

- The first TST is evaluated, measured, and interpreted. The results are documented in millimeters (e.g. 0 mm, 4 mm, 12 mm).
- If the first TST is negative, the applicant/student is given an appointment to return for a second test in 7 – 21 days.
- If the first TST is positive, it indicates that the applicant/student is infected with TB. No further testing is indicated. The applicant/student will be referred for a chest x-ray and physician evaluation. An asymptomatic applicant/student, whose chest x-ray indicates no active disease, may attend class/clinical.

Visit 3, day 7 - 21

- The second TST will be given to all applicants/students whose first test was negative, using the alternate arm.

Visit 4, 48 - 72 hours after the second test

- The second TST is evaluated, measured, and interpreted. The results are documented in millimeters (e.g. 0 mm, 4 mm, 12 mm).
- If the second TST is negative, the applicant/student is not infected.
- If the second test is positive, it indicates that the applicant/student is infected with TB. No further testing is indicated. The applicant/student will be referred for a chest x-ray and physician evaluation. An asymptomatic applicant/student, whose chest x-ray indicates no active disease, may attend class/clinical.