

Screening children new to the UK for tuberculosis (TB)

Department of Respiratory

Information for Patients

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Introduction

Tuberculosis (TB) is still a threat to health. BCG immunisation can protect you against tuberculosis. Latent tuberculosis is a tuberculosis infection which is in your body but 'asleep'. This means that you are not ill and you cannot pass TB on to others. The bacteria might 'wake up' in the future, making you ill with active TB. The good news is that latent TB can be treated before this happens. It can only be found through a blood test or TB skin test.

Who needs to get tested?

- If your child has come from a country with high rates of TB. This is despite the fact they may have had their BCG. Countries with high rates of TB can be found here: <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tuberculosis-tb-by-country-rates-per-1000000-people> or on this link [Tuberculosis by country: rates per 100000 people](#). These countries were named by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2019.
- Any child over the age of 6 years regardless of where they were born will also need a tuberculin skin test (Mantoux test) before giving the BCG.

Mantoux test is the standard test used in the UK. It is done by injecting a tiny amount of tuberculin just under the surface of the skin on the child's left forearm. It is like an allergy skin test. The area on the arm is looked at 2 to 3 days later to measure the reaction. Until the reaction is measured, it is important to follow the advice below, if not the accuracy of the result could be affected.

- Do not scratch it.
- Do not cover it with a plaster or dressing.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

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- Do not put anything on the area such as, skin creams or medications, sun lotions, perfume, make-up, shaving preparations or beauty treatments. You can wash and bathe as normal.

If you have a reaction to the test the area of skin at the injection site will become red and swollen. The TB nurse will measure the reaction and tell you if any more testing or follow up is needed.

The Tuberculin skin test (Mantoux test) can be affected by some childhood vaccinations.

Mantoux testing should not be done within 4 weeks of having received a live viral vaccine, this includes MMR. The MMR vaccine is a vaccine against measles, mumps, and rubella. If MMR vaccination is not needed urgently it should be delayed until the Mantoux has been read.

Mantoux tests can be done at the same time as other childhood vaccines not mentioned above.

Your GP, health visitor or TB nursing service will refer your child. Your child will need 2 appointments to be checked. An interpreting service will be available to support you through this appointment. It is important to bring your child for screening and attend both appointments.

If there is no proof of having received the BCG vaccination before, your child will be given this at the 2nd appointment. A leaflet will also be given. Please bring any vaccination records, the red book or parent held records. This is to make sure an up to date record is kept. This will also be shared with our local child health services and your GP.

For more information

The Green Book : [Tuberculosis: the green book, chapter 32](#)

The Truth About TB. What is Latent TB. TB Alert: <https://www.thetruthabouttb.org/latent-tb/>

Contact details : If you

- need to change your child's appointment
- feel you do not want your baby or child or young person to have the TB screening test
- have any more questions.

Please feel free to talk to the TB nursing service on 0116 258 3767.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

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Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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