

CDC Guidance Impacting TB Testing in Healthcare Facilities

Jan. 22, 2021

On Jan. 6, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) issued the following guidance regarding TB testing and COVID-19 vaccinations.

For healthcare personnel or patients who require baseline TB testing (during onboarding or entry into facilities) at the same time they are to receive an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine:

- Perform TB symptom screening on all healthcare personnel or patients.
If utilizing the IGRA, draw blood for interferon gamma release assay prior to COVID-19 vaccination.
- If utilizing the TST, place prior to COVID-19 vaccination.
- If vaccination has been given and testing needs to be performed, defer TST or IGRA until four weeks after COVID-19 vaccine two-dose completion.
 - All potential recipients of COVID-19 vaccination should weigh the risks and benefits of delaying TST/IGRA with their providers.

For healthcare personnel who require testing for other reasons:

- Perform TB symptom screening on all healthcare personnel
- Test for infection should be done before or at the same time as the administration of the COVID-19 vaccination. If this is not possible, prioritization of test for TB infection needs to be weighed with the importance of receiving COVID-19 vaccination based on potential COVID-19 exposures and TB risk factors.
 - Healthcare personnel with high-risk conditions for TB progression should be fully evaluated as soon as possible.
 - Healthcare personnel without high-risk conditions for TB progression should proceed with contact tracing (e.g., symptom screening, chest radiograph or other imaging, specimen for microbiologic evaluation) but delay test for TB infection (TST or IGRA) if prioritized for receiving COVID-19 vaccination.
 - All potential recipients of COVID-19 vaccination should weigh the risks and benefits of delaying TST/IGRA with their providers.

DIA recognizes that based on the CDC guidance, the best practice for facilities is to provide both the COVID-19 vaccine and TST/IGRA on the same day for new hires. If that is not possible, it is appropriate to delay TB testing until after the second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine has been administered. It is expected that facilities would continue to screen and document the results of the TB screening for any new employees where a delay in TB testing is advised.

If you have questions regarding TB screening or testing, please contact [Allan Lynch](#) with the Iowa Department of Public Health at 515.281.7504.