

Tuberculosis - QuantiFERON® TB Gold

The QuantiFERON® TB Gold test is a blood test for tuberculosis. Unlike a typical skin test, which requires two visits, one for the skin scratch and a second for a reading, the QuantiFERON® TB test uses a blood sample so only a single visit is needed. Also, the skin test can show “false positive” results.

What is tuberculosis?

Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. TB primarily targets the lungs but may affect any area of the body such as the urinary tract, central nervous system, bones, joints, and/or other organs. TB is typically spread through the air to others in close proximity via respiratory droplets when a person with respiratory TB disease sneezes or coughs. If not treated properly, TB can even be fatal. TB screening tests help to determine whether a person has become infected with the bacterium.

Who is at risk for TB?

This test should be used for:

- Healthcare workers
- Military personnel
- Elderly people
- Students
- Immigrants
- Close contacts of persons known or suspected to have active TB
- People who are residents in long-term care facilities
- People with weakened immune systems
- Prison inmates and persons living in other congregate settings

The QuantiFERON® test works in people who have received the BCG (bacille Calmette-Guérin) vaccination.

What should I do with my results?

It is always recommended you meet with a healthcare provider to determine what your laboratory test results mean to you. Your healthcare provider will review all of your test results and, combined with your health history, will be able to provide an accurate picture of your health status.

If your results were positive: Positive results mean you probably have TB. However, false positive results may occur so your healthcare provider will need to see you before confirming you have TB and may request additional testing.

If your results were negative: If your results are negative, you probably do not have TB. However, a false negative result may occur if you are in an early stage of infection or are immunologically compromised. Consultation with your healthcare provider may be important in the evaluation of a negative test result. In very rare occasions, the results are not clear or indeterminate. If that happens, your healthcare provider may have you tested again.

What other resources are available to learn more about my health and laboratory tests?

- Quest Diagnostics: questdiagnostics.com
- Lab Tests Online: labtestsonline.org
- WebMD: webmd.com

DLO Direct offers direct access to laboratory testing for informational purposes. A DLO Direct lab test result is not a medical diagnosis and is not intended as medical advice. Only a healthcare provider can interpret lab results and diagnose a medical condition or disease.

Because tests have not been ordered by a healthcare provider, third party entities, including Medicare and Medicaid, will not reimburse for these tests.



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