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It's recommended that people who have had the BCG vaccination be tested with PPD. A positive test doesn't necessarily mean the person has TB or has been exposed to a person with TB.

The positive results may be positive only because the person had the BCG vaccination. However, the more time that has passed since a person had the BCG vaccination, the less likely their positive PPD is due to it.

#### Who Shouldn't Have a PPD

- Anyone whose had a positive PPD
- Anyone with a history of a severe reaction to a PPD test
- Anyone who currently or in the past has been treated with TB medicine
- Pregnant women unless they have consulted with their own doctor first
- Anyone who has been immunized within the previous 5-6 week with the measles or influenza vaccine
- Anyone who has had a significant viral illness, particularly rubeola, influenza, and mumps, in the past

5-6 weeks

- Anyone on corticosteroids or immunosuppressive drugs

#### What Adverse Reactions May Occur

Most people have no problems or adverse reactions from the PPD. You may have some redness or swelling shortly after the PPD is injected. These symptoms tend to go away fairly quickly. They don't mean you have a positive test.

In highly sensitized people, a strongly positive test may cause blistering, ulcerations, and other changes of the skin. Ice packs and topical steroid cream may help relieve the pain, itching, and discomfort.

**IN EXTREMELY RARE CIRCUMSTANCES, A SEVERE ALLERGIC REACTION MAY OCCUR. IF YOU HAVE GENERALIZED ITCHING OR DIFFICULTY SPEAKING OR SWALLOWING, IMMEDIATELY GO TO THE NEAREST HOSPITAL EMERGENCY CENTER.**

## Patient Information

# Tuberculosis Screening and The PPD Skin Test

#### Your Clinic Name

123 Any Street  
Your City, State ZIP

555-555-5555  
Fax 555-555-5556

Your Logo

# Tuberculosis Screening & The PPD Skin Test

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## What is Tuberculosis

TB is an infectious disease spread by breathing in the bacteria *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. A person with active TB coughs the bacteria into the air. If the bacteria are inhaled, then the disease may occur.

TB usually affects the lungs, although it may infect the kidneys, bones, and lymph nodes. If not treated, TB may be very serious and even deadly.

## What is a PPD Test

Purified protein derivative (PPD) is made from the bacteria that causes TB. **You can't get TB from this test.**

A small amount of PPD is placed with a small needle just under the skin of your forearm.

The test needs to be read in 48-72 hours. If read sooner or later, the results are not valid.

## What To Expect From the Test

Most people have no reaction to the test. A few people have localized redness at the injection site.

## How Is The Test Read

A trained health care worker will evaluate your reaction to the PPD in 48-72 hours. A test is called positive if there is hard swelling (induration). The size of the swollen area is what's important. Redness alone doesn't make the test a positive one.

## What's a Two-Step PPD

Certain health care workers are required to have a two-step PPD. This means that one week after the first PPD a second PPD is done.

A two-step is done because some people have a "weak" immune response and their first PPD is a "false negative." The second test stimulates their immune system and become positive.

## What Does A Positive PPD Test Mean

A positive test most likely means that some time in the past you have been exposed to someone with TB. **Most people with a positive PPD don't have active TB.**

A positive test doesn't mean you will become ill. If your evaluation doesn't find active TB, then you can't spread TB and your family, coworkers, and friends don't need to be tested.

A small number of people with a positive TB test may, at some later time, develop active TB. This is the reason the doctor may recommend treatment.

## What Will Happen If My Test Is Positive

Anyone with a positive test needs additional evaluation. This includes a chest x-ray and evaluation by a physician.

The physician will make recommendations concerning treatment depending on the results of your x-ray and examination.

## What's BCG

BCG is a vaccine that is used in some countries to prevent the spread of TB. It is rarely used in this country.