Tuberculosis (TB) remains common in the UK. You will come into contact with TB when working in healthcare. You have about double the risk of catching TB compared to someone not working in healthcare.

Employees must undergo a pre-placement health screening to check for TB immunity and TB infectivity.

**BCG scar check**

If you have had a BCG (tuberculosis) vaccine we will need to check that you have a scar or documentary evidence of vaccination.

If you do not have a BCG scar then you will need a Mantoux test.

**Mantoux skin test**

A small quantity of testing solution is injected into the inside of your forearm to assess your sensitivity to tuberculin protein.

The test area is monitored 72 hours later in the Occupational Health department

- The skin test may cause mild itching and swelling around the injection site.
- Please keep the site clean and do not cover with dressing or apply any creams or lotions.

If you do not react to the Mantoux test you will need a BCG vaccination.

If you do react you will require further investigations, please read below for more information.

**IGRA blood test**

If you have a positive reaction to the Mantoux test you will require a blood test called an IGRA. This measures a person’s immune reactivity to mycobacterium tuberculosis.

The result of the blood test is usually available within a week. If the blood test is positive this may indicate you have either active TB or latent TB. You will require a chest x-ray and will be seen by the Occupational Health Doctor. The Occupational Health Doctor will refer you on to a Consultant who specialises in the treatment in TB.

**Latent TB**

Latent TB is where you have been infected with the TB bacteria but do not have any symptoms of active disease. You are not infectious but you may require treatment. Treatment for latent TB is usually recommended for healthcare workers, regardless of their age.

**Active TB**

If you have symptoms of TB or your IGRA is positive then you will be required to have a chest x-ray prior to starting work. If your chest x-ray shows active TB you will need to have had started treatment for at least two weeks before being able to start work.
Feedback

We are keen to hear your comments and ideas about improving the service. Please email the department with any comments;

OccupationalHealth.Enquiries@uhb.nhs.uk

If you have any concerns please telephone or email the Deputy Head or Head of Service as below:

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