

**A TB skin test
cannot cause TB.**

LATENT TUBERCULOSIS INFECTION (LTBI)

What is Latent TB Infection (LTBI)?

A person with latent TB infection (LTBI) has breathed in TB germs, but is not sick because their immune system has stopped the TB germs from growing and spreading. The TB germs remain alive, but are sleeping (dormant, inactive) in the body. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that one-third of the world's population is infected with TB germs and has LTBI.

People with LTBI:

- Are not sick
- Have no symptoms
- Cannot spread TB germs to others
- Can go to work and school, and do all their usual activities
- Could develop active TB disease in the future, especially if their immune system becomes weak

About one in 10 people who have LTBI will develop active TB disease at some time in their life. The risk is greatest in the first two years after they have been infected with the germs.

How are you Tested for LTBI?

A TB skin test is done by a doctor or nurse to see if there are TB germs in your body. A testing fluid, which contains TB proteins, is injected under the skin with a small needle. If you are infected with TB germs, the area where the fluid was injected may swell and feel hard (induration) within 48 to 72 hours. More tests, such as a chest X-ray and a physical examination, are done to make sure you do not have active TB disease. In special circumstances a blood test, called Interferon-Gamma Release Assay (IGRA), may be recommended by the doctor to help diagnose LTBI.



A TB skin test cannot cause TB. Someone who had a BCG vaccine or is pregnant can receive a TB skin test. The TB skin test is done free of charge for people who are contacts of someone with active TB disease.

Is there Treatment for LTBI?

A doctor may prescribe TB medicine to prevent LTBI from progressing to TB disease. This medicine is provided free of charge to health care providers to give to their patients.