

# Tuberculin Skin Test (TST)

Vaccination,  
the best protection

May 2013

This test is used to determine whether someone has been infected by the bacteria that causes tuberculosis (TB). The disease appears months or years after infection by the bacteria. TB may develop in various organs such as the lungs, bones, and kidneys. Only tuberculosis of the lungs or of the larynx are contagious.

Disease	Transmission	Signs and symptoms	Possible complications
<b>Tuberculosis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Tuberculosis is spread by inhaling tiny droplets produced when someone with contagious tuberculosis coughs or sneezes.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Cough</li><li>Sputum</li><li>Fatigue</li><li>Fever</li><li>Weight loss</li><li>Sweating</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Pleuritis (infection of the lining of the lungs)</li><li>Meningitis (infection of the lining of the brain)</li></ul>

## TST

The TST is used to verify whether a person has been infected with the bacteria that causes tuberculosis, or to establish a baseline for individuals who may come into contact with this bacteria in the future (e.g. healthcare workers).

## Symptoms after TST

Some symptoms may be caused by the TST (e.g. redness at the TST site). Other problems may occur by chance and are not related to the TST (e.g. cold, gastro, headache).

This test is safe. In most cases, it does not cause any reaction.

Frequency	Possible reactions to the TST	What to do
Often (less than 10% of people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Itching and discomfort at the TST site.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Apply a cold, damp compress to the TST site.</li><li>Do not irritate the TST site by washing, scratching, or vigorously wiping.</li><li>Do not put bandage or ointment on the TST site.</li></ul>
Sometimes (less than 1% of people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Skin rash at the TST site in the 12 hours after the test.</li></ul>	

We recommend that you stay at the clinic for at least 15 minutes after the TST because allergic reactions may occur. If an allergic reaction occurs, the symptoms will appear a few minutes after the TST. The person making the TST will be able to treat this reaction immediately.

**For any questions, contact the person making the TST, or Info-Santé 8-1-1 or your doctor.**