

# Tuberculin Skin Test for Health Care Workers and Post-secondary Health Care Students

## Baseline Tuberculin Skin Test (TST) Guidelines for Health Care Workers (HCW) and Post-secondary Health Care Students

The Alberta Health Tuberculosis (TB) Prevention and Control Guidelines for Alberta (June 2010) recommend baseline TB screening for health professionals<sup>1</sup> and others who work or volunteer with populations at increased risk for TB.

One component of screening HCW/students for TB should be a tuberculin skin test (TST). The purpose of a baseline TST is to document whether or not a HCW<sup>1</sup>/student has ever been exposed to or is currently infected with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. Access to baseline TST results enables accurate assessment and appropriate follow-up for the HCW/student should they be exposed to an infectious case of TB in the future.

**Baseline Tuberculosis (TB) screening for HCW/student will include a single step Tuberculin Skin Test (TST) except in the select groups identified below.**

**If a TST is indicated, a baseline two-step TST should be performed if:**

It is anticipated that a HCW/student will undergo repeated screening with TST at regular intervals. This includes:

- HCW/students involved in high-risk activities (regardless of age or BCG history) such as:
  - cough-inducing procedures
  - autopsy
  - morbid anatomy and pathology examination
  - bronchoscopy
  - designated mycobacteriology laboratory procedures especially handling cultures of *M. Tuberculosis*
- HCW/student who work on high-risk units to which patients with active TB are admitted
- HCW/student at facilities that require TST screening at regular intervals such as high-risk homeless shelters or inner city agencies.

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<sup>1</sup> The term health professional will be used interchangeably with definition of HCW in this document.