



The TB Blood Test: Interferon-Gamma Release Assays (IGRAs)

What is the tuberculosis blood test?

Interferon-Gamma Release Assays (IGRAs) are whole-blood tests that can aid in diagnosing Mycobacterium tuberculosis infection, including both latent TB infection (LTBI) and Tuberculosis (TB) disease. Three IGRAs that have been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are available in the U.S.:

- QuantiFERON®-TB Gold In-Tube test (QFT-GIT)
- T-SPOT®.TB test (T-Spot)

How do they work?

IGRAs measure a person's immune reactivity to M. tuberculosis. White blood cells from most persons that have been infected with M. tuberculosis will release interferon-gamma (IFN-g) when mixed with antigens (substances that can produce an immune response) derived from M. tuberculosis.

What are the advantages of IGRAs?

- Requires one visit to conduct the test
- Results can be available within 24 hours
- Does not boost a response due to previous tests
- Prior BCG vaccination does not cause a false-positive IGRA test

I have my own medical provider. How can I get the QuantiFERON® test?

Ask your provider. If your medical provider uses a laboratory that offers the test, your provider can arrange for you to get the test.

Does insurance pay for the test?

Policies vary. You should ask your insurance provider.

What do I need to bring to the lab in order to get the test done?

You will need a medical provider's order with their name and contact information. Also, bring the form of payment accepted by the laboratory you are visiting.

How will I get the results of the test?

Labs generally send results to the medical provider ordering the test. Discuss how to get the results with your medical provider.

What if I don't have a medical provider? How can I get the test?

Call the County of San Diego Tuberculosis Clinic and ask to speak with the Nurse of the Day, 619-692-8600. The fee is currently \$74, payable by cash or check.

Laboratories that provide IGRAs

(List may not be inclusive of all labs that provide this test)

Palomar Medical Center
(760) 739-3030

Quest Diagnostics
(800) 377-8448

Sharp Rees-Stealy
(619) 446-1543

Palomar Collection Station
(760) 739-2600

Scantabodies Lab
(619) 258-9300 or (619) 992-0849

Sharp Pathology Lab (SPL)
(858) 939-3650

Pomerado Outpatient Pavilion
(858) 613-4282

Scripps Clinic Lab
(858) 554-9552

UCSD Laboratories
(619) 543-6222