



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Mantoux test

Information for patients

This leaflet is for people having a Mantoux test – a screening tool for tuberculosis (TB).

The test involves injecting a small amount of a substance, called tuberculin, into the outer skin layer of the forearm. The area on the arm is looked at 2-3 days later to assess what type of reaction has taken place. Until then it may get a little red and itchy.

- Don't scratch the area; leave it alone, let the air get to it and do not cover it with a plaster.
- Don't put anything on the area that might change the reaction, such as skin creams or medications, sun lotions, perfume, make-up, shaving preparations or beauty treatments.
- Wash and bathe as normal but keep the area as natural as possible.
- In short, be careful with it but try to forget about it until the reaction is read.

This test is currently unlicensed in the UK but is used extensively throughout Europe. This means that the doctors and nurses believe that this test works well to screen for TB and NICE (National Institute for Clinical Excellence) recommend its use.

Are there any possible side effects?

Possible side effects include:

Affecting more than 1/100 people

Pain, irritation or discomfort at the injection site immediately after the injection.

Affecting less than 1/100 people

Headache, fever, enlargement of regional lymph node

Affecting less than 1/1,000 people

Anaphylactic (allergic) reactions, hypersensitivity to tuberculin can cause vesiculation (air pockets beneath the skin) and skin necrosis (death of skin cells).

Further advice:

If you are experiencing problems with the Mantoux test site, please ring:

TB Service Tel: 0118 322 6882

Tel: 0118 322 8266

This document can be made available in other languages and large print upon request.

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