

FAQs for Tuberculosis (TB) Screening Guidelines for Schools and Child Care Facilities in San Diego County

For Students/Children in Child Day Care Facilities

Q: What is the TB screening requirement for children entering a day care facility?

A: TB skin testing is not recommended across-the-board, but each child should be assessed for risk. If the child is determined to have a risk for TB, a skin test should be given. If the clinician determines the child is not at risk, a TB skin test is not necessary.

Q: If a TB skin test is needed for these children, when should it be completed?

A: Not more than one year prior to, or within 30 days following, the acceptance of a child.

Q: If the TB skin test is positive, what is the next step?

A: For anyone with a positive skin test result, a follow-up chest x-ray must be given to rule out active TB disease.

Q: Is it necessary to repeat the skin test every year?

A: A repeat examination is not necessary. However, subsequent enrollment in a different facility might necessitate a repeat examination if the previous test is more than one year old.

Q: Does the TB skin test interfere with child vaccinations?

A: The TB skin test must be given on the same day as live viral vaccines. (Live viral vaccines currently in use include measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) and varicella). If a TB skin test is not given the same day as the live viral vaccines, one month must pass before the TB skin test is given. Interaction with the live viral vaccines may give a false negative result if this one month waiting period is not observed.

Q: If the child does not return to have the TB skin test read, how much time must pass before a new test can be administered?

A: If there is no interaction with live viral vaccines (see question above), a child can receive a new TB skin test at any time.

For Students in K-12

Q: What is the TB screening requirement for students in K-12?

A: There is no TB screening requirement at this time.

For Employees/Volunteers

Q: What is the TB screening requirement for teachers/volunteers/other staff?

A: All employees and volunteers in public, private and parochial schools for K-12 and child day care facilities must have a TB skin test done within 60 days prior to employment. Exceptions may be made for volunteers who are **not** in contact with students or children.

Q: Is it necessary to repeat the skin test every year?

A: No. The skin test does not need to be repeated every year. However, employees with negative skin tests should repeat the test every 4 years. For employees with a documented positive skin test, a follow-up chest x-ray is needed to rule out active TB disease, but repeat skin testing and chest x-rays are not needed.

Q: What documentation is needed?

A: Every employee file must contain documentation from the examining physician indicating the employee is free from active TB disease.

General Information

Q: Where can people go for a TB skin test?

A: People can go to their private physician, a community clinic or one of the regional public health centers.

Q: What is the cost of a TB skin test at the public health centers?

A: A TB skin test at the public health centers is \$8, although all fees are based on the individual's ability to pay. Nobody will be refused for an inability to pay. However, fees cannot be waived if the test is required for employment or volunteer purposes.

Screening guidelines are developed by the TB Control Program, with the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency. Facilities and organizations may adopt more stringent recommendations or requirements should they deem it appropriate.

**If you have any questions regarding TB screening guidelines,
please call 619-692-8245.**