

California Adult TB Risk Assessment User Guide

Avoid testing persons at low risk

Routine testing of low risk populations is not recommended and may result in unnecessary evaluations and treatment because of falsely positive test results.

Prioritize persons with risks for progression

If health system resources do not allow for testing of all foreign-born persons from a country with an elevated TB rate, prioritize patients with at least one of the following medical risks for progression:

- diabetes mellitus
- smoker within past 1 year
- end stage renal disease
- leukemia or lymphoma
- silicosis
- cancer of head or neck
- intestinal bypass/gastrectomy
- chronic malabsorption
- body mass index ≤ 20
- history of chest x-ray findings suggestive of previous or inactive TB (no prior treatment). Includes fibrosis or non-calcified nodules, but does not include solitary calcified nodule or isolated pleural thickening. In addition to LTBI testing, evaluate for active TB disease.

United States Preventive Services Task Force

The USPSTF has recommended testing persons born in, or former residents of, a country with an elevated tuberculosis rate and persons who live in, or have lived in, high-risk congregate settings such as homeless shelters and correctional facilities. Because the increased risk of exposure to TB in congregate settings varies substantially by facility and local health jurisdiction, clinicians are encouraged to follow local recommendations when considering testing among persons from these congregate settings. USPSTF did not review data supporting testing among close contacts to persons with infectious TB or among persons who are immunosuppressed because these persons are recommended to be screened by public health programs or by clinical standard of care.

Los Angeles County recommendation

The Los Angeles County TB risk assessment incorporates national and state guidance along with location recommendation that are specific to our population. Certain risk factors, such as homelessness and frequenting community-based alcohol treatment facilities known as 'Grupos', impart high risk for tuberculosis in Los Angeles County.

Mandated testing and other risk factors

Several risk factors for TB that have been used to select patients for TB screening historically or in mandated programs are not included among the 3 components of this risk assessment. This is purposeful in order to focus testing on patients at highest risk. However, certain populations may be mandated for testing by statute, regulation, or policy. This risk assessment does not supersede any mandated testing. Examples of these populations include: healthcare workers, residents or employees of correctional institutions, substance abuse treatment facilities, homeless shelters, and others.

Age as a factor

Age (among adults) is not considered in this risk assessment. However, younger adults have more years of expected life during which progression from latent infection to active TB disease could develop. Some programs or clinicians may additionally prioritize testing of younger foreign-born persons when all foreign-born are not tested. An upper age limit for testing has not been established but could be appropriate depending on individual patient TB risks, comorbidities, and life expectancy.

Homeless and incarceration

Person experiencing homelessness and who have been in jail are vulnerable to exposure to TB disease and at risk for progression to TB disease if they have untreated TB infection. Several risks that may be associated with this population include: lack of access to care, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or HIV risk behaviors, diabetes, tobacco use, and substance abuse.

Children

This risk assessment tool is intended for adults. A risk assessment tool created for use in California for children is available on the Risk Assessment page at: <https://cdph.ca.gov/tbcb>

Foreign travel

Travel to countries with an elevated TB rate may be a risk for TB exposure in certain circumstances (e.g., extended duration, likely contact with persons with infectious TB, high prevalence of TB in travel location, non-tourist travel). The duration of at least 1 consecutive month to trigger testing is intended to identify travel most likely to involve TB exposure. TB screening tests can be falsely negative within the 8 weeks after exposure, so are best obtained 8 weeks after return from travel.

To ensure you have the most current version, go to the RISK ASSESSMENT page at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/tbcb>



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When to repeat a test

Re-testing should only be done in persons who previously tested negative, and have new risk factors since the last assessment. In general, this would include new close contact with an infectious TB case or new immunosuppression, but could also include foreign travel in certain circumstances.

When to repeat a risk assessment

The risk assessment should be administered at least once. Persons can be screened for new risk factors at subsequent preventive health visits.

IGRA preference in BCG vaccinated

Because IGRA has increased specificity for TB infection in persons vaccinated with BCG, IGRA is preferred over the TST in these persons. Most persons born outside the United States have been vaccinated with BCG.

Previous or inactive tuberculosis

Chest radiograph findings consistent with previous or inactive TB include fibrosis or non-calcified nodules, but do not include a solitary calcified nodule or isolated pleural thickening. Persons with a previous chest radiograph showing findings consistent with previous or inactive TB should be tested for LTBI. In addition to LTBI testing, evaluate for active TB disease.

Negative test for LTBI does not rule out active TB disease

It is important to remember that a negative TST or IGRA result does not rule out active TB disease. In fact, a negative TST or IGRA in a patient with active TB disease can be a sign of extensive disease and poor outcome.

Symptoms that should trigger evaluation for active TB disease

Patients with any of the following symptoms that are otherwise unexplained should be evaluated for active TB disease: cough for more than 2-3 weeks, fevers, night sweats, weight loss, hemoptysis.

How to evaluate for active TB disease

Evaluate for active TB disease with a chest x-ray, symptom screen, and if indicated, sputum AFB smears, cultures and nucleic acid amplification testing. A negative tuberculin skin test or interferon gamma release assay does not rule out active TB disease.

Most patients with LTBI should be treated

Because testing of persons at low risk of LTBI should not be done, persons that test positive for LTBI should generally be treated once active TB disease has been ruled out. However, clinicians should not be compelled to treat low risk persons with a positive test for LTBI.

Emphasis on short course for treatment of LTBI

Shorter regimens for treating LTBI have been shown to be more likely to be completed and the 3 month 12-dose regimen has been shown to be as effective as 9 months of isoniazid. Use of these shorter regimens is preferred in most patients. Drug-drug interactions and contact to drug resistant TB are typical reasons these regimens cannot be used.

Shorter duration LTBI treatment regimens

Medication	Frequency	Duration
Rifampin	Daily	4 months
Isoniazid + rifapentine*	Weekly	12 weeks**

*The CDC currently recommends DOT for this regimen, however, data has shown that SAT is noninferior to DOT in the United States. Many clinicians are using SAT or modified DOT.

**11-12 doses in 16 weeks required for completion.

Patient refusal of LTBI treatment

Refusal should be documented. Offers of treatment should be made at future encounters with medical services if still indicated. Annual chest radiographs are not recommended in asymptomatic persons. If treatment is later accepted, TB disease should be excluded and CXR repeated if it has been more than 3 months from the initial evaluation.

Treatment Regimen Fact Sheets:

Isoniazid/Rifapentine:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/TBCB-INH-RIF-LTBI-fact-sheet.pdf>

US Preventive Services Task Force Latent TB Infection Screening Recommendations:

<https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/UpdateSummaryFinal/latent-tuberculosis-infection-screening>

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