The TB Skin Test

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TST..WHO CAN ADMINISTER?

- IN VIRGINIA, only prescribers (MD, NP & PA) RN’s and LPN’s (working under the direct supervision of an RN) can legally possess and administer tuberculin which is regulated as a class VI substance.

- VIRGINIA CODE 54.1-3408 G

TB Skin Testing
Second Encounter

- MEASUREMENT
- FOLLOW-UP
Reading The Skin Test

- Test is read 48 - 72 hours after the injection
- Individuals who present after 72 hours?
  Positive test can be read up to one week
- Diameter of the indurated area is measured across the forearm
- Erythema (redness) is not measured
- Record in MM
Recording the PPD Test Reaction

- Recording the skin test reading is a two-step process
  - Determine the measurement of the TST reaction in mm of induration
  - Record the measurement in MM
- ORWs are not allowed to determine significance

Evaluation and Management of Persons + TST or IGRA Results

- Evaluate promptly for active disease
  - CXR – repeat only for symptoms/exposure
  - symptom screen
- Isolate symptomatic persons until TB ruled-out or no longer infectious
- Remind periodically of symptoms of active TB and need for prompt evaluation
- Isolate symptomatic persons until TB ruled-out or no longer infectious
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Factors That Can Cause A False-Positive Reading

- Infection with non-tuberculous mycobacteria (mycobacterium, other than M.tb or MOTT)
- Vaccination with BCG
  - BCG is not a contraindication for TST!
- Follow-up of positive reaction the same
  - CXR
  - Evaluation for treatment

Factors That Can Cause A False-Negative Reading

- Recent TB infection
  - It takes 2 - 10 weeks after TB infection for the body's immune system to be able to react to the tuberculin
- Anergy
  - The inability to react to an antigen because of a weakened immune system – many causes
  - In HIV, anergy increases with decreased immune response (if CD 4 < 200 = 72% anergic)
  - Testing with anergy panels no longer recommended

Factors That Can Cause A False-Negative Reading (cont.)

- Very young age (< 6 months old)
- Live virus vaccination (e.g., MMR, nasal flu, rotavirus, varicella, zoster, herpes, yellow fever)
  - Defer TST 4-6 weeks
- Immunosuppressive drugs, corticosteroids, new class of arthritis drugs (TNFα)
- Overwhelming active TB
PRACTICE

- Arms for measurement
- Money for measurement