



Technical Bulletin



Date: July 16, 2021

Topic: Updated Tuberculosis (TB) Testing Interim Recommendations Around COVID-19 Vaccinations

Contact: Susan McElhany, DMD, Division of Public and Behavioral Health TB Program, Office of Public Health Investigations and Epidemiology, smcelhany@health.nv.gov

To: Nevada Healthcare Providers, Healthcare Facilities, Public Health Departments, Correctional Facilities, Infection Preventionists, and Infection Control Departments

Situation

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recently updated its interim guidance on clinical considerations for use of the COVID-19 vaccines addressing all three available types, Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, and Janssen vaccines and includes guidance on tuberculosis (TB) testing (see section "Laboratory Testing" in the full guidance). The full updated CDC *Clinical Considerations* can be accessed at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/clinical-considerations.html>.

Summary of CDC's Interim Guidance for TB Testing Around COVID-19 Vaccine Administration:

1) Interpretations of TB test results in COVID-19 vaccinated persons:

- The reliability of a negative TST or IGRA [interferon gamma release assay] result after COVID-19 vaccination has not been studied.

2) Considerations for the *Timing of TB testing* for TB infection of healthcare personnel, patients, and inmates around the administration of the COVID-19 vaccine:

- COVID-19 vaccination should not be delayed because of testing for TB infection.
- Perform IGRA blood draw or TST placement *before* COVID-19 vaccination series is initiated.
- Post COVID-19 vaccination, defer IGRA or TST ≥ 4 weeks after COVID-19 vaccine single-dose or 2-dose series completed.
- Situations involving TB contact investigations: please refer to the CDC's [Interim Clinical Considerations](#).
- Weigh the risks and benefits of delaying TST/IGRA in potential recipients of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Recommendations from the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health TB Program for TB Testing Around COVID-19 Vaccination:

1) Perform IGRA blood draw or TST placement *before or at the same time* as COVID-19 vaccination series initiated (all types of COVID-19 vaccines), if possible.

2) If TB testing must be delayed 4 weeks after COVID-19 vaccine single-dose or 2-dose series:

- Create *interim TB infection control protocols* for COVID-19 vaccine-related TB testing delays.
- Document situations where TB testing was delayed, providing vaccination type and dates; perform the TB test no later than 8 weeks following the COVID-19 vaccine series.
- Administer a TB Symptoms Questionnaire and perform TB symptom screening for individuals who are unable to obtain TB testing.
- New hire/pre-placement situations: If IGRA (recommended) or TST cannot be performed before receiving the vaccine, additionally, obtain a physical examination or certification from a healthcare provider indicating the individual is free from active TB disease.
- Healthcare personnel who require annual TB testing but are delayed beyond the TB testing anniversary date due to COVID vaccination should receive a single-step TST or an IGRA as soon

as reasonably possible. (In this situation, conducting a repeat “baseline” 2-step TST is not necessary for continuing healthcare personnel working at the same facility; however, baseline 2-step TST or an IGRA is required for new healthcare personnel).

Resources:

Nevada Administrative Codes related to TB Testing, NAC 441A.370-380:

<https://www.leg.state.nv.us/NAC/NAC-441A.html#NAC441A>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention TB website: <https://www.cdc.gov/tb/default.htm>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19 Vaccination website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/index.html>

Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health: https://dpbh.nv.gov/Resources/Technical_Bulletins-New/



Lisa Sherych, Administrator
Division of Public and Behavioral Health



Ihsan Azzam, Ph.D., M.D.
Chief Medical Officer