

Guidelines for Tuberculosis (TB) Testing

For the safety and well-being of our long-term care residents, all Regional Employees working within the homes are required to complete and submit screening for tuberculosis prior to beginning work in a long-term care home. This is a requirement from the Ministry of Long-Term Care and the Fixing Long Term Care Act, 2021.

What is Tuberculosis?

Tuberculosis is a serious illness that mainly affects the lungs. Only some people who get TB infection become sick with TB disease. There are two different types of TB:

1. Latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI).
2. Active tuberculosis disease.

Tuberculosis is spread through the air from one person to another. For this to happen, a person must have TB disease in their lungs that gets into the air through coughing, sneezing, laughing, or singing. Once in the air, another person can breathe the TB into their lungs.

Symptoms of tuberculosis include a bad cough that lasts longer than 2-weeks and may make you cough up blood or thick phlegm; chest pain; weakness or tiredness; weight loss; a lack of appetite; chills; fever; and night sweats.

Why Screen for Tuberculosis?

Screening for tuberculosis can help identify whether an individual has latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI) and active tuberculosis which requires additional treatment.

What TB screening methods are accepted?

1. Documented results of a negative two-step tuberculin skin test (TST) completed within the last 12-months from start date.
2. Documented results of a negative one-step tuberculin skin test (TST) completed within the last 12-months from start date (if there is documentation of a previous negative two-step TST also provided).
3. Documented results of a negative interferon gamma release assay blood test completed within the last 12-months from start date.
4. Documented results of a negative chest x-ray completed within the last 12-months from start date.

Need to get screened for tuberculosis?

One and two-step TST screening is available **free of charge** for regional employees at our Niagara Region Long-Term Care TB Testing Clinic:

Location	Niagara Region Headquarters – Campbell East Entrance 1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold, ON, L2V 4T7
Clinic Hours / Dates	Mondays from 1:00 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. TB administration only Wednesdays from 1:00 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. TB reading only
Contact	For any questions leading up to your TB testing, you can send an email to laura.matthews@niagararegion.ca

No appointment is necessary! Drop-in sessions for the TB testing clinic are welcome during hours listed above.

Please note: TB testing offered at Niagara Region Headquarters is offered at no cost to the candidate. Costs incurred by TB testing completed by other health care providers will not be refunded by the Niagara Region.

Tuberculin skin test (TST) requirements

Getting Started	Plan to attend the Niagara Region TB Clinic or book all four appointments with your doctor, nurse practitioner, or walk-in clinic.
Visit #1	Step 1 Test Administered – Visit Niagara Region’s TB Clinic or your Health Care Professional A tiny amount of the tuberculin vaccine is injected under the skin, usually in your forearm. Tuberculin is a sterile extract purified protein derivative made from the bacteria that causes tuberculosis. After receiving the injection, a small pale bump will form at the site.
Visit #2	Step 1 Test Results Interpreted – Return to Niagara Region’s TB Clinic or your Health Care Professional After 48-72 hours from your first visit, you must return to have your results read. Your forearm may be red, this does not mean the test is positive. The clinic staff will interpret the result and notify you if the result is negative or positive. If your result is positive, you will be referred to Niagara Region Public Health for further follow-up.
Visit #3	Step 2 Test Administered – Visit Niagara Region’s TB Clinic or your Health Care Professional Between 1-4 weeks after your first test is complete, you must return to have the 2 nd step completed. The clinic staff will follow the same steps as they did when your 1 st step was completed.
Visit #4	Step 2 Test Results Interpreted – Return to Niagara Region’s TB Clinic or your Health Care Professional After 48-72 hours from the second visit, you must return to have your results read again. Once the result is read, you have completed your 2-step TST.

Submitting Results	After completing the 2-step TST process, you will need to submit evidence of this to the Candidate Gateway by your documentation deadline.
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Have you previously tested positive for TB from a TST, have previously been treated for TB, or have received the BCG vaccine?

If you have previously tested positive, have been treated for TB, or have received the BCG vaccine, you will likely test positive again on a tuberculin skin test. Instead, please submit evidence of screening from one of these methods instead:

1. Documented results of a negative interferon gamma release assay blood test completed within the last 12-months from start date.
2. Documented results of a negative chest x-ray completed within the last 12-months from start date.

Have any other questions?

If you have any questions regarding the Niagara Region Long-Term Care TB Testing Clinic, please reach out to Laura Matthews via email at laura.matthews@niagararegion.ca

Niagara Region TB Testing Form

To be completed by your health care practitioner

Name: _____ Telephone #: _____

Facility / Health Care Practitioner Name: _____

Step 1: Test		
Date (mm-dd-yy)	Time	Vaccine Name
Manufacturer	Lot Number	Expiry Date
Dose	Route	Site
Healthcare Professional Signature		

Step 1: Read	
Date (mm-dd-yy)	Time
Results (record mm induration)	Interpretation (record as positive or negative)
Health Care Professional Signature	

Step 2: Test		
Date (mm-dd-yy)	Time	Vaccine Name
Manufacturer	Lot Number	Expiry Date
Dose	Route	Site
Healthcare Professional Signature		

Step 2: Read	
Date (mm-dd-yy)	Time
Results (record mm induration)	Interpretation (record as positive or negative)
Health Care Professional Signature	