

INTERFERON-GAMMA RELEASE ASSAY (IGRA)



What is an IGRA?

An interferon-gamma release assay (IGRA) is a blood test that can help detect antigens specific to *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. Similar to a TB skin test, an IGRA does not differentiate between latent (sleeping) TB infection or active TB disease.

What are the advantages of an IGRA?



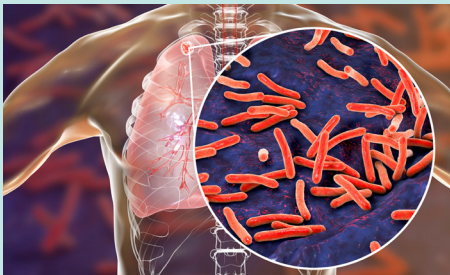
Requires one visit to conduct the test



Results are usually ready in 2-10 days



Previous BCG (Bacille Calmette-Guerin) vaccination will not affect test results



What is Tuberculosis?

Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease caused by the bacteria *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. The disease most commonly occurs in the lungs (infectious TB disease), but can also occur in any part of the body, such as the brain, kidney, or bone (non-infectious TB disease).

Where can I get this test done?

Talk to a doctor or nurse practitioner about ordering an IGRA test. Refer to your local laboratory for IGRA testing times and locations.

For additional information, please contact us at:

Windsor-Essex County Health Unit
519-258-2146 ext. 1420

Toll free: 1-800-265-5822

Windsor Office:
1005 Ouellette Avenue
Windsor, ON N9A 4J8

Leamington Office:
33 Princess Street
Leamington, ON N8H 5C5

What are the disadvantages of an IGRA?

Test is not covered by OHIP and usually costs approximately \$100

What does my result mean?



Positive

TB infection is likely



Negative

TB infection is unlikely



Indeterminate (uncommon)

Follow up with a health care provider is recommended

In what situations can this test be used?

- Any situation when a TB skin test is used except in children <2 years.
- Contact with someone who has been diagnosed with TB.
- Arrival from a country with a high number of TB cases.
- Patients with a compromised immune system, such as HIV or transplant patients.
- Patients starting certain types of medications, such as steroids and TNF-alpha blockers.
- Anyone who has been vaccinated with BCG.
- An IGRA can be done on the same day as a live vaccine or at least 4 weeks after receiving a live vaccine.