

# New Test Announcement



## T-SPOT. TB to replace QuantiFERON- TB

T-SPOT.TB, an Interferon Gamma assay (IGRA), has replaced the QuantiFERON-TB Gold test on St. Luke's test menu.

Both tests are Interferon-gamma release assays (IGRA) that detect cell mediated responses to Mycobacterium tuberculosis antigens. CDC states that "An IGRA may be used in place of a TST in all situations in which the CDC recommends tuberculin skin testing as an aid in diagnosing *M. tuberculosis* infection with certain preferences and special considerations." Despite the indication of preferences, use of either test is acceptable in medical and public health practice. Preferences for TB testing methodologies exist in the following circumstances:

Interferon-Gamma assays are preferred for patients who have low probability of returning to have a skin test read, or who have received BCG either as a vaccine or for cancer therapy.

Tuberculin skin testing is the preferred method for testing children who are less than five years of age.

### Benefits of the T-SPOT. TB Test

- A standard number of patient cells are counted, providing a numerical result thus enabling easier interpretation of serial results that fall near the cut point.
- "Borderline" category for results near the cut point decreases false negative and false positive results.

### Specimen Requirements for T-SPOT. TB

- One 6mL lithium or sodium heparin anticoagulant (green top) tube with no gel. **Tubes that are not completely full will be rejected by the testing facility.**
- Specimens should be held at room temperature and sent to the laboratory as soon as possible after collection. Specimens must arrive at St. Luke's no later than 4:00 p.m. to be shipped out appropriately.

Reference: Updated Guidelines for Using Interferon Gamma Release Assays to Detect *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* Infection- United States, 2010 MMWR 2010, 59 (RR-5);1-25.

[http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5905a1.htm?s\\_cid=rr5905a1\\_e](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5905a1.htm?s_cid=rr5905a1_e)

**If you have questions, please contact K. Warren, M.D. (218)249-6914, Microbiology Medical Director or Jennifer Viergutz, MT (ASCP) (218) 249-5724, Laboratory Operations Manager.**

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