

# Evaluating Positive TB Screening Quantiferon (QFT) Lab Results

Whatcom County Health Department TB Program (360) 778-6100

## Steps to Assess TB Risk & Evaluate Latent TB Infection (LTBI)

- **Initial Step – If positive QFT results & NO risk factors for TB exposure & no history of prior positive skin test:**  
Check if borderline QFT result by reviewing specific TB (Antigen) minus Nil value. Results between **0.35 -0.70** are considered “low positive” and may need repeating. Call to consult with TB nurse or MD 778-6100 (WCHD office)

## Rule out Active TB Disease by Symptom Review, Physical Exam & CXR (Report if abnormal CXR or Sx’s of TB)

- ✓ Confirm no current symptoms of active TB disease — *productive cough >3 weeks, persistent fatigue, unintentional weight loss, night sweats, fever, hemoptysis; No lymphadenopathy or other unusual symptoms.*
- ✓ Physical exam with attention to adenopathy or signs of extra-pulmonary TB
- ✓ Obtain Single view (PA) Chest X-ray– CXR expected to be normal, verifying no evidence of active TB disease. Normal CXR does not avert need for treatment – risk of progression to active TB disease remains for life without treatment

## Evaluating Latent TB Infection

1. **Reassure Patient Latent TB is Not Contagious.** TB bacteria are inactive and cannot be spread to others. Provide Latent TB fact sheet as significant others are often worried about patient’s positive TB status.  
[https://www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/factseries/prevention\\_eng.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/factseries/prevention_eng.pdf)
2. **Assess for Recent Infection** Ask about prior TB testing and review previous results. Individuals previously positive have less risk than a new positive or recent conversion; risk is increased if < 2 years since last negative test. *Highest risk of progression to TB disease is within first 2 years of infection.*
3. **Assess Risk of Progression to Active TB Disease** Overall without preventive treatment healthy individuals face a 10% lifetime risk of developing active TB disease. Certain medical and social conditions substantially raise this risk. See CDC references & Online TST/IGRA Risk Calculator tool to help identify additional risks (see link next page)
4. **Consider Treatment of Latent TB** CDC guidelines have shifted away from 9 months of INH to short-course based regimens for primary treatment. Three standard treatment options are available. *Duration of regimen and drug interactions determine choice. Assess patient’s willingness to adhere to daily or weekly medication schedule and regular monthly monitoring visits.* Treatment is generally well tolerated. MD & TB nurse available to consult as needed.

## High-Priority Candidates for LTBI Treatment Using a TST or IGRA Blood Test (QFT)

<b>People in these groups should be given high priority for LTBI treatment if they have a positive IGRA blood test result or a TST reaction that is <math>\geq 5</math> mm</b>	<b>People in these groups should be given high priority for LTBI treatment if they have a positive IGRA lab result or a TST reaction that is <math>\geq 10</math> mm</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recent contacts of people with infectious TB disease</li><li>• HIV infected persons</li><li>• Persons with fibrotic changes on chest x-ray consistent with old TB</li><li>• Organ transplant recipients</li><li>• Persons immunosuppressed for other reasons e.g., patients on prolonged therapy with corticosteroids <math>\geq 15</math>mg per day of prednisone &gt; 1 month, OR those on biologics / TNF-alpha antagonists</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Foreign born Immigrants</b> to the U.S. from areas of the world with high rates of TB (<i>Asia, India, Vietnam, Philippines &amp; Pacific Islands, Africa, Eastern Europe, Russia, or Latin America</i>)</li><li>• <b>Residents and employees of high-risk congregate settings</b> (e.g. nursing homes, homeless shelters, prisons, hospitals, or other health care facilities)</li><li>• <b>Persons with medical conditions</b> that increase the risk for TB disease (silicosis, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, head and neck cancer, gastrectomy jejunioileal bypass, malnutrition or &gt; 10 below ideal weight)</li><li>• Injection drug users</li><li>• Mycobacteriology lab personnel</li><li>• Children under 4 years of age</li></ul>

<http://www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/factsheets/testing/skintestresults.pdf>

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**TB Risk Assessment**

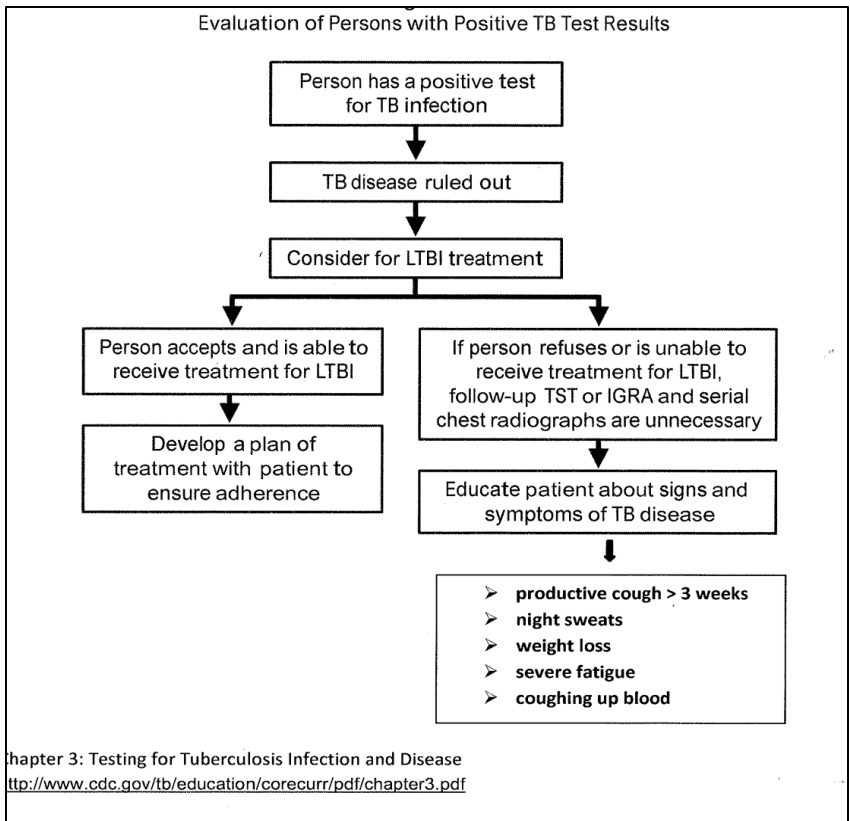
- **The Online TST/IGRA Interpreter** - Interactive tool calculates an individual's risk of progression to TB disease based on age & other risk factors <http://www.tstin3d.com/index.html>
- **WA State Dept. of Health Adult TB Risk Assessment & Guide** – scroll for guidelines pages 2-3 <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/343-144-AdultTBRiskAssessment.pdf>

**Evaluation & Treatment**

- ➔ • **CDC TB Tools for Health Care Providers:** [http://www.cdc.gov/tb/education/provider\\_edmaterials.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tb/education/provider_edmaterials.htm)
- CDC has [updated the recommendations](#) for short-course once-weekly **isoniazid-rifapentine for 12 weeks (3HP)**. Alternate short course regimen is **rifampin** daily for 4 months. **Assess potentially significant drug interactions with rifamycins**
- **12 Dose Fact Sheet for Clinicians:** [https://www.cdc.gov/tb/topic/treatment/pdf/LTBI\\_Clinicians\\_Info.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/tb/topic/treatment/pdf/LTBI_Clinicians_Info.pdf)
- **LTBI Treatment Guidance in WA State:** <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/343-158-LTBI%20guidance%20in%20WA.pdf> **LTBI Treatment Quick Reference Sheet:** <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/343-157-LTBI%20Treatment%20Options%20One%20Pager.pdf>
- **National TB Controllers Association Provider Guidance:** [http://www.tbcontrollers.org/docs/resources/3hp/NTCA\\_Provider\\_Guidance\\_3HP\\_11918.pdf](http://www.tbcontrollers.org/docs/resources/3hp/NTCA_Provider_Guidance_3HP_11918.pdf)
- **Treatment of LTBI – Maximizing Adherence – Initial Provider Tips for Communicating the Value of LTBI Treatment** <http://www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/factsheets/treatment/ltbiadherence.htm>

**Fact Sheets for Patients**

- ➔ • **12 dose regimen & Medication Tracker / Symptom checklist:** **English, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese** <https://www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/pamphlets/12-doseregimen.htm>
- **Rifapin** [https://www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/pdf/rif\\_508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/pdf/rif_508.pdf) Spanish <https://www.cdc.gov/tb/esp/publications/factsheets/pdf/Rifampicina.pdf>
- **INH** [https://www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/pdf/INH\\_508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/pdf/INH_508.pdf) Spanish <https://www.cdc.gov/tb/esp/publications/factsheets/pdf/Isoniazida.pdf>
- **Latent TB Fact Sheet "You Can Prevent TB"** [https://www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/factseries/prevention\\_eng.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/factseries/prevention_eng.pdf)



For more information, contact:  
**TB Nurse (360) 778-6100**  
**Whatcom County TB Program**

