

TB and the Urine LAM Test



WHAT IS TB?

Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease caused by germs that usually affects the lungs but can also affect other parts of the body.

WHO CAN GET TB?

Anyone can get TB. However, people with a weak immune system such as those living with HIV are more at risk of getting TB.

HOW DO I CATCH TB?

TB is usually spread from person to person through the air. Small particles containing TB germs are expelled when a person with lung TB coughs, sneezes, sings, talks, laughs, or spits. You can catch TB when you inhale these particles.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE TB?

If you have any of the following symptoms, visit your nearest clinic for a TB Test:

- A cough of any duration.
- Unintentional loss of weight.
- Unusual sweating at night.
- Fever.

HOW DO I PREVENT SPREADING OF TB?

- You must always cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze by wearing a face mask or using a tissue.
- You must open the windows to allow fresh air in.
- If you have any TB symptoms, you must get tested for TB.
- If you have been in contact with anyone with TB, you must get tested.
- If you test positive for TB, you must take your treatment regularly, for the duration of time prescribed period.

CAN TB BE CURED?

Yes! TB can be treated and be cured. You must take your treatment as prescribed by your healthcare worker for six months or longer.

WHAT IS THE URINE LAM TEST?

- It is a simple urine test used to diagnose TB in people living with HIV.
- The test detects an antigen called Lipoarabinomannan (LAM) which is cleared by the kidneys into urine.
- The LAM is mainly found in people with active TB disease.

WHO SHOULD GET THE URINE LAM TEST?

- People who are living with HIV who have advanced HIV disease can be tested with the urine.
- People who are living with HIV who are seriously ill or admitted in hospital can be tested with the urine.
- People who are living with HIV who have symptoms of TB can be tested with the urine.

WHY IS THE URINE LAM TEST ONLY FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV?

- It has been difficult to diagnose TB in people living with HIV.
- Research findings showed that this test works best in detecting TB in people who are HIV positive.
- The use of the test in people living with HIV has been shown to reduce deaths.

HOW IS THE URINE LAM TEST PERFORMED?

- You will be given a small container and asked to go and pass urine.
- The test will be conducted by the nurse or doctor in the clinic.
- A sample of your urine will be applied into the test strip.
- You will be asked to wait for about 25 minutes for the results.
- You will be called in once the results are ready and informed whether the test was positive or negative.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE URINE LAM TEST?

- The test diagnoses both pulmonary and extrapulmonary TB.
- The test result will be available within 25 minutes.
- Treatment will be started on the same day.

WHAT ARE THE WEAKNESSES OF THE URINE LAM TEST?

- The test cannot distinguish between drug sensitive and drug resistant TB.
- A sputum specimen will be collected and sent to the laboratory for an Xpert test.
- The test can miss TB therefore, if you have TB symptoms, a negative LAM test does not mean you do not have TB disease. Other tests may need to be performed such as Xpert or chest X-ray.

WHERE CAN I GET TESTED WITH URINE LAM TEST?

- The test is available in clinics, Community Health centres and Hospitals.
- To get tested, go to the clinic nearest to you.