



QuantiferON TB Gold In-Tube Lab Test Information

The QuantiferON TB Gold (QFT) is an Interferon Gamma Release Assay (IGRA) lab test available for TB screening. The QFT can be used in place of a traditional TB skin test for all types of TB screening. CDC TB guidelines emphasize that *both the TB skin test (TST) and IGRA lab test are considered equally valid tests*; however, there are certain situations where one type of test is preferred. Please review the CDC Fact Sheet on IGRA's & MMWR 2010 Guidelines for full details (link below).

Important Guidelines:

- ✚ QFT is preferred for screening those with a history of BCG vaccine (a skin test is still acceptable)
- ✚ A skin test should be used for screening children under 5 (regardless of BCG status). The QFT has not been validated for children 5 and under.
- ✚ *Neither a TB skin test nor QFT lab test are used to diagnose active TB disease.*

How to Order the QFT:

- QFT is available through Peace Health Medical Labs and Lab Corp. A specialized collection kit is required. Peace Health Lab order # 58150. Results available in 3 days.

Advantages of the QFT lab test:

- Only one visit is required; helpful for those on tight schedules or unable to return for reading.
- A **single QFT** can be used *in place of two-step skin testing*; this includes baseline screening for students in health care training or for new employees in health care settings. A single QFT can also be used for patients who require TB screening before starting immunosuppressive therapy.
- QFT has a higher specificity improving accuracy when testing foreign born patients with history of BCG vaccine. The higher specificity means the test does not cross-react with BCG strains or other non-TB mycobacteria that can cause false-positive skin tests.
- QFT can be used to rule-out or confirm Latent TB Infection in cases of questionable or unexpected positive skin test results. Examples include using QFT to confirm infection for those at risk who believe their test is only positive because of BCG, or ruling-out infection for those with a positive skin test but no TB risk factors for exposure to TB.

Disadvantages:

- Requires physician's order & ICD- code (positive TST 795.51, Screening exam bacterial diseases V74.1)
- Higher cost— (~ \$130.00) Many insurance plans cover the cost including Medicare & Medicaid. For those without insurance, Peace Health lab offers an "Easy Pay" discount if paid date of service (~ \$80.00). It may help to remind patients that the cost and need for a chest X-ray will be spared if the QFT is negative.

CDC Link: IGRA fact Sheet: <http://www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/factsheets/testing/IGRA.pdf>

Updated MMWR Guidelines: "Updated Guidelines for Using IGRA's to Detect MTB Infection –US, 2010" <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5905.pdf>