



MLS: Laboratory Update
Interferon Gamma Release Assay (IGRA) for
***Mycobacterium tuberculosis* Survey**
January 13, 2009



****Please forward this to all appropriate personnel within your institution****

This is a routine message from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the Minnesota Laboratory System (MLS). This message is being sent to MLS laboratory contacts serving Minnesota residents. You are not required to reply to this message.

NOTE: The Minnesota Laboratory System email address has changed to: mnlabssystem@state.mn.us

Background

Testing for the presence of latent infection with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* is a common and fundamental activity for the prevention and control of tuberculosis in the United States. Until recently, the only testing method has been the Mantoux tuberculin skin test (TST). This method is over 100 years old, is prone to error and reader bias and can cross-react with nontuberculous bacteria present in the body. In the past few years, Interferon Gamma Release Assays (IGRAs) that test for the presence of *M. tuberculosis* have become available in the United States. IGRA testing is more specific than the TST. Currently, the QuantiFERON-TB-Gold® is available in the United States. The T-SPOT® is used in Europe and may soon be available in the United States.

We Need Your Assistance

To gain a better understanding of the availability of IGRA testing in Minnesota we are conducting a brief online survey. Your participation is very important. After compiling and analyzing the survey data, we will be reporting our findings back to you, so that you are aware of where the test is available in Minnesota.

To Take the Survey

We estimate the total time needed to complete the FOUR QUESTION survey is less than 10 minutes. Please complete the survey by January 23, 2009. Please fill out the first part of the survey, even if your laboratory does not do testing for TB. To access the survey, click on the link below or cut and paste the entire address into your web browser www.health.state.mn.us/divs/phl/survey/igratesting2008.htm

Questions?

If you have questions regarding the survey or prefer to conduct the survey by telephone, please contact Beth Kingdon, TB Education Coordinator/Planner at 651-201-5529 or Paula Snippes at 651-201-5581. We appreciate your time and assistance in helping us develop a better understanding of IGRA laboratory testing practices.

Thank you for taking the time to answer the IGRA survey and for supporting TB control efforts in Minnesota.

Paula M. Snippes, MT (ASCP)
Program Advisor, Minnesota Laboratory System
Public Health Laboratory, Minnesota Department of Health
Phone: 651-201-5581
www.health.state.mn.us/mls

Deb Sodt, RN, MPH
Manager, TB Prevention and Control Program
Minnesota Department of Health
www.health.state.mn.us/tb