



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

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Division of Public Health

January 28, 2021

TO: Local Health Department TB Staff
FROM: Jason Stout, MD, MHS, TB Controller/Medical Director
RE: SARS-CoV-2 vaccine and tuberculosis screening

The Centers for Disease Control recently released a memo concerning the timing of tuberculosis screening with a tuberculin skin test or interferon gamma release assay and vaccination against SARS-CoV-2 infection (link to this memo: <https://www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/letters/covid19-mrna.html>). The memo recommends deferring required baseline latent tuberculosis testing for four weeks after SARS-CoV-2 vaccination has been performed.

There is no evidence to suggest that SARS-CoV-2 vaccination with the currently available mRNA vaccines would interfere with results of either the tuberculin skin test or the interferon gamma release assays. While there is a theoretical risk of interference with tuberculin skin testing or interferon gamma release assay results by some live virus vaccines, the mRNA vaccines are not live virus vaccines. Furthermore, delaying tuberculosis testing has the potential to create logistical challenges for both necessary tuberculosis screening and SARS-CoV-2 vaccination.

The North Carolina Tuberculosis Control Program, in consultation with the North Carolina Tuberculosis Advisory Committee, recommends that tuberculosis screening with the tuberculin skin test or interferon gamma release assays may be performed without regard to the timing of SARS-CoV-2 vaccination. Similarly, vaccination with an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna) may be performed without regard to the timing of tuberculosis screening.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH; EPI/CD/TB CONTROL

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