

## Patient Information:

# Having a Chest X-ray at Your TB Service

### Key points

- Chest x-rays are a common test that you may be asked to have when you visit your Tuberculosis (TB) Service. Chest x-rays are used to look for evidence of TB disease in your lungs.
- Chest x-rays are safe and painless. If you are pregnant you should tell the nurse or radiographer before you have a chest x-ray.

### Why have I been asked to have a chest x-ray?

There are several possible reasons that you may have been asked to have a chest x-ray:

- To look for evidence of Tuberculosis (TB) disease in your lungs
- If you have been in contact with someone with active TB
- If you have a positive screening test for TB infection (by Tuberculin Skin Test or Interferon blood test)
- If you are a recent immigrant who had an abnormal chest x-ray prior to migration
- To monitor response to TB treatment
- Other reasons, as requested by your doctor.



### Are x-rays harmful?

The amount of radiation used in x-rays is small. The amount of radiation you are exposed to by having an x-ray is similar to that received by taking a 10-15 hour plane flight. It is not dangerous for you to have regular chest x-rays. In fact, it is more dangerous for you and the community if you do have a problem with your lungs and it is not detected early by x-ray.

If you are pregnant, or think you may be pregnant, please tell the nurse in the clinic and the radiographer before your x-ray. In most cases, the x-ray can be delayed until after the baby is born. However, if it is still necessary to have a chest x-ray while pregnant, a special lead shield will be put around your body to protect your baby from the x-rays.

Breastfeeding mothers can safely continue to feed their baby without risk to their milk or the baby.

### What happens when I have the CXR?

A qualified radiographer will take your x-ray. You may be asked to remove some items of jewellery, for example necklaces or earrings. Occasionally beading or buttons can also be seen on the film and if this is the case, you may be asked to change into a gown to have your chest x-ray.

If your radiographer is a male and your religion does not permit you to be in the room with him on your own, please ask for a female member of staff to be present.

While the x-ray is being taken, you will be asked to take a deep breath in and hold it while the x-ray picture is taken. You should also remain still.

### What happens after I have the x-ray?

After the chest x-ray is taken, you will be asked to wait until the radiographer ensures that the picture has printed satisfactorily. Unless you need to wait to see a doctor or to have other tests, you will then be told that you can leave the clinic.

The x-ray will be given to a doctor to be reported on. It may sometimes take a few days for it to be reported on. The person who takes your x-ray (radiographer) does not report on x-rays and so cannot give you your result.

After your chest x-ray is reported on, a decision is made as to whether you will require further x-rays, check-ups or treatment. Each individual case is different and so questions on your follow-up cannot always be answered until the x-ray is reviewed.

If a significant problem is seen on your chest x-ray, you will be contacted immediately and asked to return to the clinic for a doctor's review and/or further tests.

### Contact your local TB service for more information

For more information check the NSW Health website – [www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/tuberculosis/](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/tuberculosis/) or contact your local TB service.

### TB Service Contact Details

Sydney	Canterbury Hospital 9787 0946	Concord Hospital 9767 5675	Royal Prince Alfred 9515 8615
South West Sydney	Liverpool Hospital 8738 4888		
Northern Sydney	Hornsby Hospital 9477 9217	Manly Hospital 9976 9542	Royal North Shore Hospital 9463 1360
Central Coast	Gosford Hospital 4320 3388		
South East Sydney	Prince of Wales Hospital 9382 4643	St George Hospital 9113 2430	Sydney Hospital 9382 7535
Illawarra and Shoalhaven	Wollongong Hospital 4253 4138		
Western Sydney	Parramatta Health Service 9843 3110		
Nepean Blue Mountains	Nepean Hospital 4734 2536		
Hunter New England	John Hunter Hospital 4921 3372	Tamworth Community Centre 6767 7786	Armidale Community Health 6776 9958
Northern NSW & Mid North Coast	Lismore Population Health 6620 2280	Coffs Harbour Health Campus 6656 7855	
Southern & Murrumbidgee	Albury Community Health 6058 1820	Griffith Community Health 6966 9900	Queanbeyan Community Health 6298 9233
	Wagga Wagga Hospital 5943 1000	Goulburn Community Health 4827 3913	Bega Community Health 6492 9620
Far West & Western NSW	Broken Hill Population Health (08) 8080 1510		