



# DSHS Chagas Disease (*Trypanosoma cruzi*) Exposure Assessment and Testing Guidance

## Process 1

## Process 2

## Process 3

Person exposed or potentially exposed to a triatomine (kissing bug) and the bug or photo of the bug is available for identification

- Email the digital photo(s) to DSHS at [the.vet@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:the.vet@dshs.texas.gov)
- If bug appears to be a triatomine or no photo is available, send the bug to DSHS for identification and testing (instructions and submission form are available on the DSHS Chagas [page](#)).
  - If the bug is not a triatomine, the person is NOT at risk for Chagas disease
  - If the bug tests **Positive** for *T. cruzi*, go to **Process 2** or **3**, depending on timeframe
  - If the bug tests **Negative** for *T. cruzi*, the person is NOT at risk for Chagas disease
- If the bug appears to be a triatomine, but is not available for testing and you wish to pursue clinical testing, go to **Process 2**

- If the person tests **Positive** at **DSHS** OR **CDC**, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/chagas/hcp/clinical-care/index.html> for information on Chagas disease evaluation and treatment
- If the person tests **Negative** at CDC, the person does NOT have Chagas disease

Person tests positive at a blood bank  
**OR**  
 Person exposed or potentially exposed to a *T. cruzi*-positive triatomine bug >8 weeks prior  
**OR**  
 Person with onset of cardiac disease compatible with chronic Chagas disease  
**OR**  
 Person with Chagas-positive mother or sibling  
**OR**  
 Person potentially exposed to blood or tissue from an infected person or animal >8 weeks prior (e.g., needlestick injury, tissue transplant)

Perform serology screening at the DSHS lab (uses TWO tests that detect antibodies to different antigens) OR a commercial lab (see page 2 for lab information).

**Negative Serology**  
Person does NOT have Chagas disease

**Positive OR Inconclusive Serology**

**If performed at DSHS lab:** The DSHS lab will automatically forward **Inconclusive** specimens to the CDC for further testing provided sample volume is sufficient. **Positive** samples do not need additional testing.

**If performed at commercial lab:** Public health should request that any remaining sample be forwarded to the DSHS lab & notify provider **OR** the provider can collect a new sample and send to the DSHS lab for follow up testing.

Person exposed or potentially exposed to a *T. cruzi*-positive triatomine bug ≤8 weeks prior  
**OR**  
 Person traveled to a highly Chagas-endemic area and has acute symptoms  
**OR**  
 Person potentially exposed to blood or tissue from an infected person or animal ≤8 weeks prior (e.g., needlestick injury, tissue transplant)

- Prior to sample submission, consult with Regional DSHS Zoonosis Control staff to 1) determine if PCR testing is warranted, and 2) to discuss other testing options
- If CDC agrees to test by PCR, submit the appropriate sample to the DSHS lab for routing to CDC (see page 2 for lab information). If serologic testing (Process 2) or blood smear examination is recommended, the sample should be sent to DSHS or a commercial lab.

# Major Laboratories that Currently Perform *Trypanosoma cruzi* Testing

- **Texas Department of State Health Services Laboratory**
  - [Trypanosoma cruzi IgG Antibody Immunoassay](#)
  - Check Chagas IgG box in Section 6 of G-2A form (Feb 2024)
- **ARUP Laboratories**
  - [Trypanosoma cruzi Antibody, IgG](#)
  - Test Code 0051076
- **Quest Diagnostics**
  - [Trypanosoma cruzi Antibody, Total](#)
  - Test Code 13230
- **Mayo Clinic Laboratories**
  - [Trypanosoma cruzi Total Antibody, Enzyme-Linked Immunosorbent Assay, Serum](#)
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**
  - [Chagas Disease Serology](#) and [Chagas Disease Molecular Detection](#)
  - Chagas serology at CDC is for confirmatory testing only. Samples should be sent to the state public health lab or a commercial lab for initial screening.
  - Mark Chagas Disease box in Section 7 of G-2A form (Feb 2024) when requesting Chagas PCR, which requires pre-approval, OR when consultation with public health has shown that CDC serology testing is needed.

Disclaimer of Endorsement: Reference herein to any specific commercial laboratory or test does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the Texas Department of State Health Services.