Reviewer's report

Title: Use of a T cell interferon gamma release assay in the investigation for suspected active tuberculosis in a low prevalence area

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Reviewer: Jae-Joon Yim

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This interesting and well-written manuscript describes the role of QuantiFERON-TB Gold assay (QTF-TB Gold assay) in the diagnosis of active TB. Clarifying several points would make the manuscript more valuable.

1. TST was performed in some patients. In those cases, what was the sequence of TST and QTF-TB Gold assay?

2. PPD was used as one of the stimulants, however, interferon-gamma measurement from stimulation with PPD was not included in the criteria for the positive tests. If then, why was PPD used?

3. Based on higher PPV among patients with extrapulmonary TB (90.5%), authors recommended QTF-TB Gold assay for the diagnosis of extrapulmonary TB. Why do you think the performance of QTF-TB Gold assay is better for the diagnosis of extrapulmonary TB than for pulmonary TB? This point should be discussed.

4. For me, the associations of BMI or WBC counts and results of QTF-TB Gold assay is most interesting information of this manuscript. However, the meaning of this relationship was not discussed in discussion. Authors should provide their interpretation of these associations.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'