

New tuberculosis test cheaper for poor countries

December 8 2010, By MARIA CHENG , AP Medical Writer

(AP) -- Health officials say a new test to diagnose tuberculosis in less than two hours will be available to poor countries for a fraction of its original price.

Foundation for Innovative and New Diagnostics officials said Wednesday the test will be sold to more than 100 [developing countries](#) at a 75 percent discount - about \$17 (euro12.72), instead of \$67 (euro50.14).

The Swiss-based foundation said it negotiated the price reduction with manufacturer Cepheid after realizing it would be too expensive for poor countries or international donors to roll it out at the original price

Several donors are investigating introducing the test in South Africa and India. Officials expect the price to drop once it is produced in commercial quantities.

The [World Health Organization](#) said the test could revolutionize [tuberculosis](#) treatment and is a dramatic improvement on the standard test, which takes up to three months to confirm a diagnosis. The agency recommended countries hardest hit by tuberculosis include the test in their strategies to control the disease. The test was announced in September.

More information:

<http://www.finddiagnostics.org>

<http://www.who.int>

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