

Infrared Thermometers Fact Sheet

Throughout the COVID rollercoaster, temperature screening with Infrared thermometers has been the first line of screening.

There is a lot of conflicting advice on the effectiveness of infrared thermometers for detecting accurate and meaningful changes in core body temperature.

I have included some references you may like to consider when deciding if you will be using an infrared scanner. This is definitely not a definitive list but may be a starting point.

Should you choose to use an infrared thermometer as a screening tool when it is deemed safe to recommence your massage practice, here are some things to look for.

- **Sensitivity:** look for +/- 0.1 degrees
- **Fit for purpose:** A TGA registered device deemed appropriate for healthcare setting
- **Ease of use:** some have double beams that join into a dot when the subject is within scanning range. Takes the guess work out of being too close/ too far
- **Type:** You need a Non-Contact Infrared thermometer, not a tympanic membrane thermometer (the one you insert in the ear)
- **PPE:** When taking a temperature, ensure you are wearing appropriate PPE as social distancing is not possible.
- **Operating range:** ensure that the thermometer will operate in the ambient conditions where you will be screening
- **Cost:** you get what you pay for. There are a lot of cheap versions on the market at the moment. Be aware and check TGA listing.
- **Scope of Practice:** I have seen discussion on some sites asking if taking temperatures is outside of the MT scope of practice. That is for you to determine and I am not offering advice either way.

Remember, that an Infrared thermometer is simply a tool. It is not infallible and should definitely not be used as the primary means of screening clients.

Screening effectiveness

Hausfater *et al*, 2008. Cutaneous Infrared Thermometry for Detecting Febrile Patients,
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2600390/>

Quilty *et al*. (2020) Effectiveness of Airport Screening at Detecting Travellers Infected With Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32046816/?from_term=temperature+screening&from_pos=7

[https://www.journalofhospitalinfection.com/article/S0195-6701\(20\)30058-X/fulltext#back-bib4](https://www.journalofhospitalinfection.com/article/S0195-6701(20)30058-X/fulltext#back-bib4)