



STATEMENT ON BCG VACCINATION AND COVID-19

New Tools Working Groups

The BCG vaccine is a crucial tool for protecting babies and young children in high burden countries from TB, which killed 1.5 million people in 2018 and caused 10 million people to fall sick. Recent media reports indicating that BCG, the only licensed vaccine to protect against TB, may be protective against COVID-19 and has led to new interest in this century-old vaccine.

However, BCG's ability to protect against COVID-19 infection or disease has not yet been tested in rigorous, prospective, randomized, controlled clinical trials. Such trials are now underway to study the effects of BCG in healthcare workers and others at high risk of COVID-19.

Decisions on the use of BCG to protect against COVID-19 should await these results, and adequate supplies of BCG should be preserved to protect infants and children in high burden countries from TB.

For more information on this issue, please refer to the following resources:

- WHO [Scientific Brief](#) on Bacille Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccination and COVID-19
- Treatment Action Group [Statement](#) and [Information Note](#) on BCG Vaccine and COVID-19
- [Bacille Calmette-Guérin \(BCG\) vaccine and the COVID-19 pandemic: responsible stewardship is needed](#), HS Schaaf et al., International Journal of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease