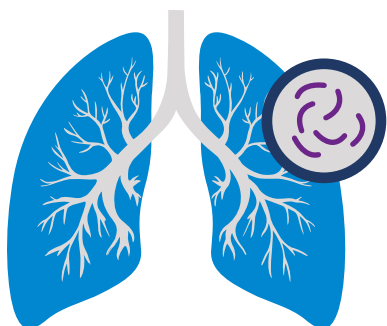


Protect your child with the BCG vaccine

What is TB (tuberculosis)?



TB is an infection that spreads through the air and mainly affects the lungs. It is treatable, but treatment can take a long time.

TB mainly affects the lungs, but it can affect other parts of the body. Young children are more likely to get TB in other parts of the body, like the brain (TB meningitis). TB is usually treatable with the right medicines, but treatment takes a long time.

Who needs the BCG vaccine?

The BCG vaccine provides protection from TB. In Ireland, most children do not need the BCG vaccine because TB is now uncommon.



We offer BCG to children under 12 months of age who are at a higher risk of coming into contact with TB. These children are those who are under 12 months of age and who:

- live with someone who was born in a country with high TB rates.
- were born in or lived for more than three months in a country with high TB rates and have not had the BCG vaccine already.
- were born to parents or in regular contact with people who have untreated TB.

You can find all countries with high TB rates by visiting the World Health Organization website:

- www.who.int/health-topics/tuberculosis

From time to time other children may be recommended a BCG vaccine - your healthcare provider will advise you on this.

Who should not get the BCG vaccine?

Some children should not get the BCG vaccine. The nurse or doctor will talk to you before vaccination to make sure your baby is suitable for the BCG vaccine.

If your child is unwell, delay getting the vaccine.

If your child is unwell with a high temperature (over 38 degrees Celsius), you should postpone the BCG vaccine until your child is well.

If you are unsure if your baby should get the vaccine, ask your doctor or nurse: **“Does my baby need the BCG vaccine?”**

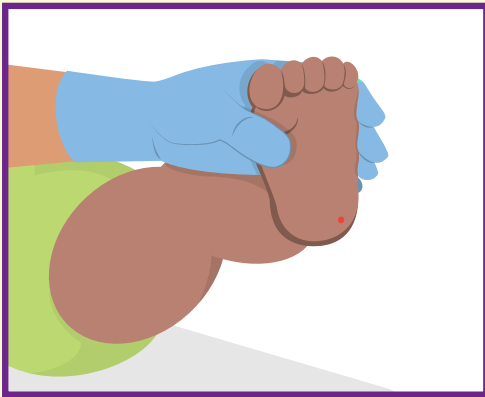
For more information visit hse.ie/bcg

Plain English
Approved by NALA



Before vaccination

Heel prick test for babies



Parents of all babies born in Ireland are offered a heel prick test for their babies within a week of their birth.

The parents of babies who move to Ireland when their babies are under 12 months of age are also offered a heel prick test for their babies.

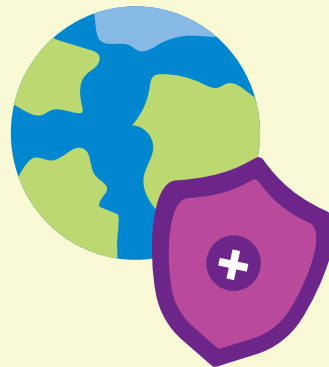
This test checks for some serious medical conditions including conditions that affect the immune system. We need to check the results of this test before we can give your baby the BCG vaccination.

Test if your baby or older child may have been exposed to TB

Your baby should have a test before receiving the BCG vaccine if they:

- were born in a country with high TB rates.
- lived in a country with high TB rates for more than 3 months.
- are a contact of an untreated TB case.

This test checks whether they have already been infected with TB.



Do I have to delay getting the other childhood vaccines if my child gets BCG?

No. We can give childhood vaccines at any time after the BCG vaccine. You should not delay arranging them for your child.

If an older child needs another vaccine within 3 months of having BCG, they should get the vaccine in the other arm.



Reporting side effects

If you think you or your child have had a side effect after receiving a vaccine, you can report it to the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA) at www.hpra.ie. Your doctor, nurse, pharmacist or a family member can also report the side effect to the HPRA.

You can also find links to the patient information leaflets for the vaccine at www.hpra.ie. Search for BCG vaccine to read the relevant information.

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