



National Institute for Public Health  
and the Environment  
*Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport*

# *Vaccination* against TB

Information about the BCG vaccination



**In the Netherlands, children who have at least one parent from a country with a high rate of TB are vaccinated against TB. This leaflet tells you more about this vaccination.**

## What is TB?

Tuberculosis (TB) is a disease caused by tuberculosis bacteria. The effects of TB can be much more serious in young children than in adults.

## Why vaccinate against TB?

There is a vaccine against TB. It is also known as the BCG (Bacillus Calmette-Guérin) vaccine. The vaccine contains TB bacteria that have been weakened and cannot cause disease. These bacteria train the body to build its own defence against TB.

The vaccine can be given at a very early age. The vaccine does not give 100% protection against TB. Still, the risk that vaccinated children develop serious forms of TB, such as TB meningitis, is much lower. The vaccine can be given together with other vaccines.

## Who gets a vaccine?

Children with at least one parent from a country with a high rate of TB. According to our records, your child belongs to this group.

People who plan to spend a long time in a country with a high rate of TB, or who will be working in such a country in high-risk situations, are also sometimes advised to get vaccinated against TB. See the **Travel and TB leaflet** for more information.

## From invitation to vaccination

### 1 The vaccination invitation and leaflet

A vaccination invitation and an information leaflet about the BCG vaccination will be sent to you by post.



### 2 The appointment

Please report to the Municipal Public Health Service (GGD) at the time stated. The invitation also tells you what to bring with you to the appointment.



### 3 Vaccination preparation

You will be called in and asked to sit down. The vaccination will be given in the left upper arm. So this upper arm should be bare. The GGD employee will tell you how best to hold your child.



### 4 The injection

A little fluid will be injected into the skin on the left upper arm. The GGD employee will tell you what you should and should not do and what to keep an eye on after the vaccination. You will be given a separate leaflet about the after-care following the BCG vaccination.



## What will your child notice?

The vaccine will not make your child ill. If your child runs a high temperature (fever) immediately after the vaccination, this is not caused by the vaccination but by something else. A red, raised blister will usually appear after one to two months at the injection site. This can sometimes take even longer. Blood and/or pus may come out. There may also be swelling of a gland in the neck or armpit. After about six to 12 months, a scar will form where the blister was.

It will take a few weeks for the BCG vaccination to take effect.

### Why first do a skin test (tuberculin skin test)?

Sometimes, a skin test needs to be done first. This is the case if your child has already been abroad, for example, or if your child is already aged one or above. The skin test reveals whether the child already has antibodies against TB bacteria. The skin test is safe for children.

The reaction to the skin test can be assessed after two to three days. The vaccine may then be given, depending on the result of the skin test.

### More information and support

If your child develops swelling of the glands on the neck or armpit, it is vital that you contact the Municipal Public Health Service (GGD). You can also contact the GGD if you have any concerns about the blister.

## What do we do with your data?

The GGD follows the rules of the law in how it treats your personal data that are stored in your medical file. Your data may be used anonymously to monitor and improve the quality of the programme.

## Any questions, tips, complaints or compliments?

- Please contact the TB department of the GGD in your region. You can find the contact details on [www.ggd.nl](http://www.ggd.nl) and in the vaccination invitation. GGDs have a complaints procedure.
- For more information about TB, go to [www.rivm.nl/tuberculose](http://www.rivm.nl/tuberculose).

This information is available in English at:  
Xogtaan oo Soomaali ah waxaa laga heli karaa:

ብቋንቋ ትግርኛ ዝተተርጎመ ሞልክዕ ናይዚ ፋብሬታ፡ ኣብ'ዚ ዝስዕብ ገጽ ክርከብ ይከኣል፡-

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این معلومات به زبان دری در اینجا قابل دسترس است:



[www.rivm.nl/en/tuberculosis/information-materials](http://www.rivm.nl/en/tuberculosis/information-materials)

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