

TB vaccine Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG)

Information for the community

There is a vaccine (needle) called Bacillus Calmette–Guérin (BCG) for tuberculosis (TB).

It used to be given to all babies in Australia all the time. Because we do not have much TB in Australia now, is not given out as often anymore.

If you are in a place where people have TB, it might still be a good idea, so speak with your local health clinic about your options.

The BCG vaccine for young children

The BCG vaccine is best for children five years old or younger.

If a baby or young child gets the vaccine, it helps prevent them from getting really sick, even if TB is in their community.

If there is TB in your community, SA TB services or health workers might visit your area and have the vaccine available for children. Alice Springs Hospital is also providing the vaccine for new babies. Children may need a skin test prior to having the BCG vaccine.

Health workers will always ask the family for permission before vaccinating a child.

The BCG vaccine for older children and adults

The vaccine works best for young children, but the doctor might suggest older children or adults have the BCG vaccine in some cases.

Getting the vaccine

Talk to your local clinic or hospital about how to get the vaccine. It will not cost you any money.

It is normal to get a lump after the needle, which will form a sore and can take a few months to fully heal.

Do not worry about this sore unless it looks infected. Check with your local health clinic if you have any concerns.



For more information:

Royal Adelaide Hospital, SA TB Services
Telephone: (08) 7074 1089 (business hours)
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au

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