

# BCG VACCINE FACT SHEET FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS IN BOTSWANA



FS 739935



Promoting access to safe medicines

## 1. Indication

The Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) Vaccine U.S.P. (Organon strain, live attenuated *Mycobacterium bovis*) is used for the prevention of tuberculosis (TB).

It is especially effective in protecting young children against severe forms of TB, including tuberculous meningitis and miliary TB.

## 2. Administration

Age / Population	Regimen	Schedule
Newborns (at birth or up to 12 months)	Single dose	0.05 mL intradermally
Children >12 months and adults (where indicated)	Single dose	0.1 mL intradermally

### Route of administration:

- Intradermal injection only
- Preferred site: upper left arm (deltoid region)

**Do not administer BCG vaccine subcutaneously, intramuscularly, or intravenously.**

**Important: Health care workers should always consult the vaccine package insert for detailed preparation and administration instructions.**

## 3. Warnings and Precautions

- BCG is a live vaccine and should not be given to immunocompromised individuals, including HIV-positive infants.
- Local reactions at the injection site are common (redness, swelling, or ulceration) and usually resolve over weeks.
- Disseminated BCG infection, though rare, can occur in immunocompromised persons.
- Do not administer another vaccine in the same arm until the BCG lesion has healed.
- Known immunodeficiency (including HIV infection in infants), seek further assessment from a medical doctor or paediatrician.

## 4. Contraindications

- Do not administer the vaccine to individuals with:
- History of severe allergic reaction to any component of the vaccine
- Active tuberculosis infection
- Severe acute illness or febrile condition
- Pregnancy

## 5. Adverse Reactions

### Common side effects include:

- Mild redness, swelling, or ulceration at the injection site
- Low-grade fever
- Regional lymph node enlargement

### Rare but serious side effects include:

- Suppurative lymphadenitis
- Osteitis/osteomyelitis caused by BCG
- Disseminated BCG infection (especially in immunocompromised individuals)
- Severe allergic reaction (e.g. anaphylaxis) are rare but can occur.

## 6. Adverse Event Reporting in Botswana:

Health care workers are encouraged to report any suspected adverse events following immunisation (AEFI) to BoMRA. Reporting helps monitor vaccine safety and protect public health. Even if you are uncertain whether the vaccine caused the reaction, reporting ensures potential concerns are identified early.

**Steps to report an AEFI:**

1. Scan the QR code provided
2. Accept the terms and conditions
3. Complete the reporting form with all available information
4. Submit the form



**Or contact:**

**Email:** [aefi@bomra.co.bw](mailto:aefi@bomra.co.bw)

**Telephone:** 3731727

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