

New tuberculosis vaccine is developed

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U.S. scientists have announced development of a vaccine to prevent tuberculosis, one of the world's most deadly diseases.

Colorado State University researchers said their vaccine triggers the body's immunity in a novel way -- by activating specific immune system functions that enhance the response to the bacterium that causes tuberculosis.

Although still in preliminary stages of testing, scientists said the vaccine would likely be effective against all strains of TB, including multi-drug and extensively drug resistant tuberculosis. In addition, preliminary evidence shows the vaccine has promise of working after exposure to tuberculosis, which no other tuberculosis vaccine in current development has achieved.

"This novel vaccine system provides the template to design a series of new tuberculosis vaccines that could be very inexpensive to make," said Professor Ian Orme, head of the research team that developed the vaccine. "The next stage is to test the vaccine for long-lasting immunity and its ability to boost existing vaccines."

Human trials for the vaccine are expected within two to three years.

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