

BCG-Covid study on the elderly

ICMR- NIRT has initiated a multi-centric study to see if Bacille Calmette Guerin (BCG) vaccine can reduce the severity of COVID-19 disease among elderly individuals aged 60 years and above residing in hotspots for SARS-CoV2. This study will be carried out in 6 states of the country: Tamilnadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi in approximately 1000 healthy volunteers above 60-years of age. In Tamilnadu, this study will be done in close collaboration with the Greater Chennai Corporation and Department of Public Health of the State. The study will also document whether BCG vaccine can prevent the occurrence of the SARS-CoV-2 infection and its progression and death associated with COVID-19 among the elderly individuals. The study uses the same BCG vaccine that is administered to newborn babies as a part of National Immunization programme for more than 50 years in this country. There are pre-set criteria in the study that will decide on eligibility of a volunteer to participate in this study. The study would enroll approximately 1000 participants and follow them closely for a period of 6 months post vaccination.