

TIME TO ACT

How a vaccine for Group B Streptococcus could transform maternal and newborn health

THE PROBLEM

Group B Streptococcus (GBS) is a common bacteria that usually lives harmlessly in pregnant women but can cause serious health problems for women and their babies.

Each year, GBS is associated with

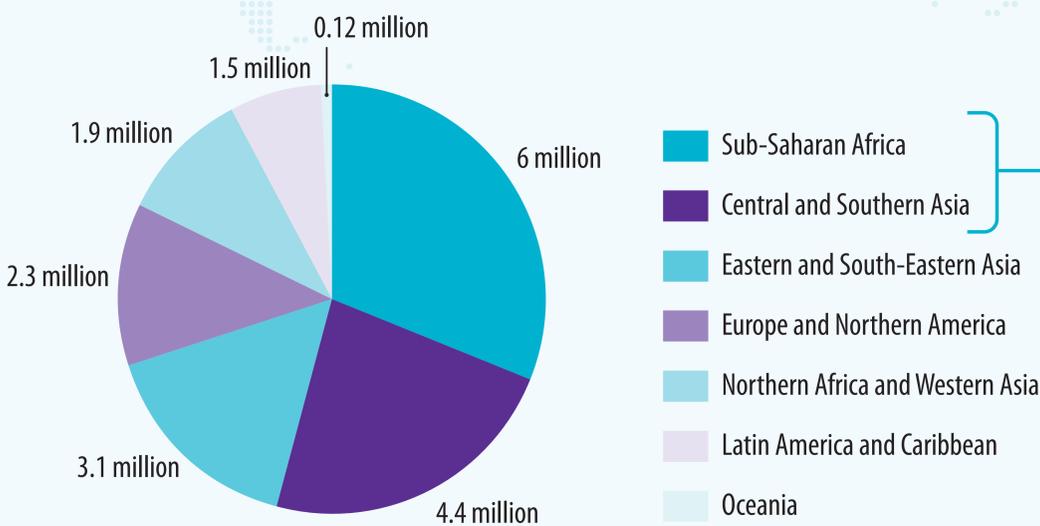


Mothers can pass GBS to their unborn babies during pregnancy or to newborns during labor.

Globally, 20 million pregnant women carry GBS each year – most of them currently unidentified and untreated.

Antibiotics are used during pregnancy and labour to reduce the risk of illness from GBS, but treatment isn't widely available in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) where the toll of GBS is greatest.

Number of Pregnant Women Carrying GBS Each Year, By Region



OVER HALF THE BURDEN OF GBS IS FOUND IN TWO REGIONS, Sub-Saharan Africa and Central/Southern Asia, accounting for over 10 million pregnant women who risk passing GBS infection to their unborn baby or newborn

THE SOLUTION

Vaccines given to pregnant women represent the best tool to tackle this public health challenge that affects mothers and babies throughout the world.

GBS vaccines have the potential to prevent, each year:



If priced affordably, vaccines are likely to be both feasible to implement and cost-effective in both higher-income markets and low and middle-income countries, where the need is greatest.

TIME TO ACT



1 **Improve care now.**

Protect mothers and babies with stronger, integrated family-centered care.

GBS is a much more serious health problem than previously understood according to new evidence on the risks of stillbirth, preterm birth, and long-term disabilities. Right now, we can:

- Broaden access to antibiotics
- Raise awareness about the risks of GBS
- Provide support for families affected by GBS, including the knowledge and tools to advocate for greater action on the issue



2 **Accelerate vaccine development.**

A GBS vaccine has the potential to save lives and improve the health of women and babies around the world.

BY 2026

at least one **AFFORDABLE VACCINE** against GBS is approved and WHO-prequalified for use during pregnancy

BY 2030

at least **10 COUNTRIES** will have introduced GBS vaccines



3 **Prepare to deliver vaccines.**

The burden of GBS and context for vaccine introduction vary widely among countries and regions.

Action is needed in low- and middle-income countries to:

1

STRENGTHEN HEALTH SYSTEMS for vaccine delivery, monitoring and evaluation

2

UNDERSTAND LOCAL BURDEN of GBS and prepare to introduce new vaccines

3

BUILD THE NEXT GENERATION of GBS researchers

Read the full report here: <https://bit.ly/GBSvaccine>