

Statement – Immediate Release

Groundbreaking studies prompt The Union to urge global leaders to scale up commitment to TB prevention and treatment

Results from two new studies in both adults and children show that TB medicine rifampin offers a less toxic, shorter, more tolerable treatment option for latent tuberculosis (TB), representing a potential paradigm shift for TB prevention around the world.

The Union welcomes new research (led by [McGill University Health Centre](#) in Canada) suggesting that the use of rifampin could cut the treatment time of latent TB from nine to four months. Furthermore, rifampin offers a welcome alternative to the toxic isoniazid, which is currently used for TB prevention and carries certain health risks, including the risk to liver health.

This is potentially ground-breaking news with considerable benefits to patients and over-burdened health care systems alike. It is now incumbent on the first ever United Nations High-Level Meeting (UNHLM) on TB on 26 September to scale up the resources invested in TB research to aid the development of a new vaccine and other new tools for preventing and treating TB.

We are asking the UN HLM on TB to commit to:

- A two-month or less oral cure for TB and its drug-resistant forms before 2028

- One or more new or repurposed vaccines ready to enter the registration process for global use by 2025.
- Affordable point-of-care TB diagnostics that can identify new infections and tests for drug resistance by 2025.
- Diagnostics and treatment regimens that are suitable for children – because children with TB have different needs than adults.
- All research and development must be guided by principles of affordability and equity.

Find The Union's 'call to action' document in full [here](#).

Because over 95 percent of people with TB are diagnosed in low- and lower-middle income countries, it is vital that any new developments are fully accessible to anyone and everyone who needs them. That means suitable for all contexts and populations where TB occurs, and accessible and affordable for national programmes to implement and scale-up.

Governments are now in the final stages of negotiating the first ever global political declaration on TB, to be approved at the UN General Assembly in September. The current draft declaration includes a global target to provide at least 30 million people with preventative therapy for latent TB, including at least 4 million children under 5 years old. If we are to meet the 2030 target, it is essential that this represents the starting point of a global TB prevention drive.

Read more – the [adult](#) trial and the [children's](#) trial.

Access The Union's UN HLM digital toolkit [here](#).

For more details, contact: press@theunion.org

About the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union):

The Union is a global scientific organisation with the mission to improve health among people living in poverty. We do that by conducting scientific research, working with governments and other agencies to translate research into better health for people around the world, and delivering projects directly in the field. The Union is made up of a membership body of people around the world who help to advance our mission, and a scientific institute that implements public health projects within countries. For close to 100 years, we have been leaders in the fight against some of the world's biggest killers, including tuberculosis, lung diseases and tobacco use.

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