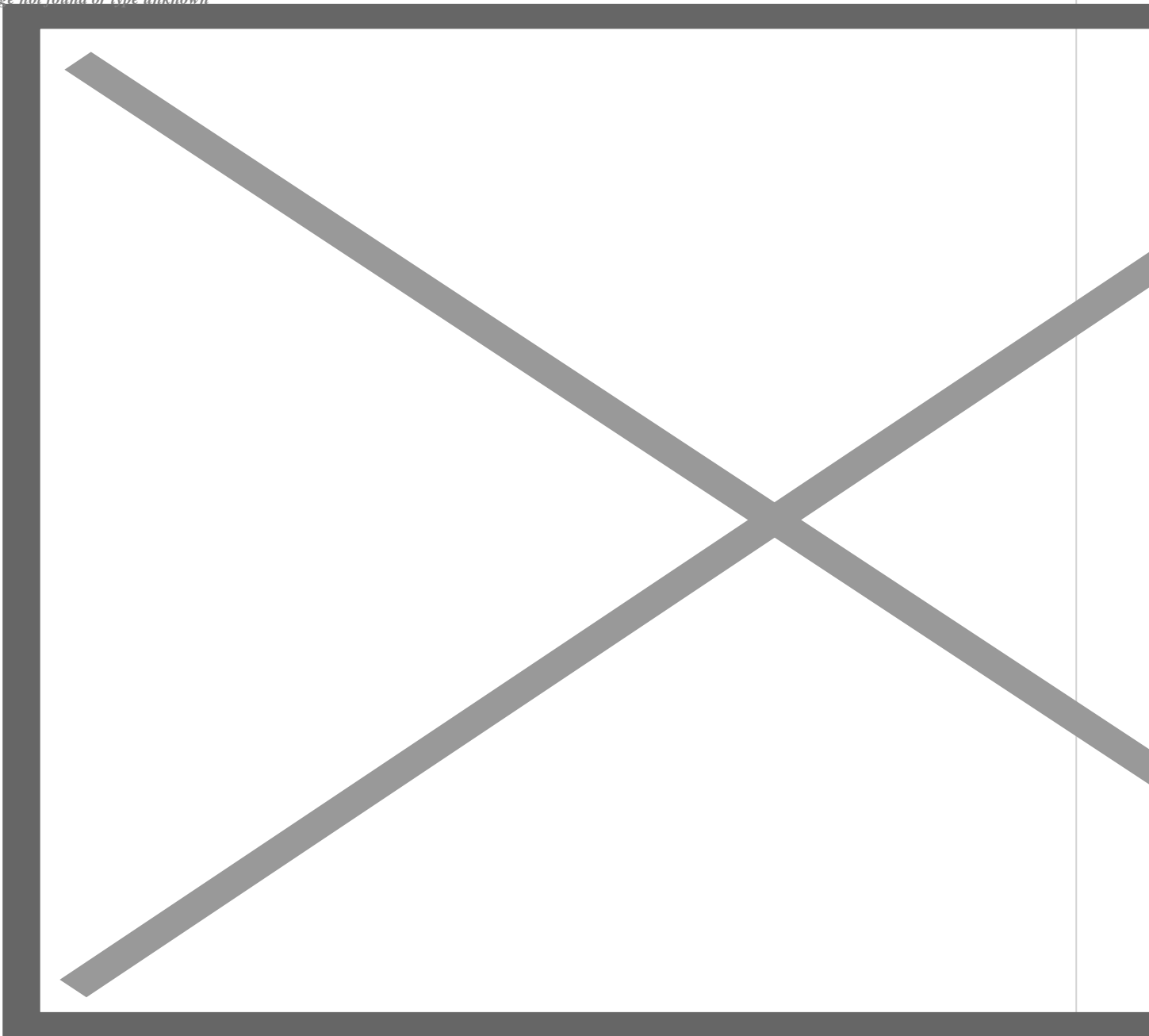


# *Cuba works to protect its children from pneumococcal bacteria*

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By María Josefina Arce

Even with the limitations imposed by the criminal U.S. blockade also on science, Cuba has been able to achieve novel medicines and in the face of the COVID 19 challenge, its scientists created three vaccines, of proven efficacy and safety, against the disease caused by the new coronavirus.

This colossal effort to protect the health of the population includes the anti-pneumococcal vaccine candidate, whose clinical trials were temporarily halted due to the urgency of obtaining immunogens against COVID 19, which has spread rapidly around the world.

The good news is that the clinical trials of this candidate, called Quimi-Vio, which protects against seven of the most infectious and highly prevalent serotypes of the pneumococcus bacteria, the pathogen that causes most pneumonia and bacterial meningitis in children, have now resumed.

Behind Quimi-Vio is the Finlay Vaccine Institute, a prestigious center to which we owe Soberana Plus and Soberana 02, also successfully applied to the pediatric population between two and 18 years of age. In fact, Cuba became the first country to immunize its children and young people against the virus.

It is in the province of Cienfuegos where a new anti-pneumococcal vaccination has started this month among infants between one and five years of age, whose parents give their consent.

Already in this territory in the center of the country, a trial of this injectable was developed between 2017 and 2019, which demonstrated safety, by generating only the expected adverse events of a mild nature.

On that occasion, more than 91% of the infants aged one to five years old who could be vaccinated received the immunogen, which speaks of the confidence in our scientists, in their high training and professionalism.

For Cuba, obtaining this vaccine is essential to guarantee the protection of its children, since the blockade prevents us from acquiring the two existing vaccines in the world because of the U.S. capital involved in their manufacture, another example of the criminal nature of this unilateral measure, condemned by the international community and which still persists with force.

In addition, Quimi-Vio would give the Greater Antilles technological independence to fight diseases caused by that bacterium, as the three vaccines against COVID did more recently, which made the country not depend on immunogens created by the big pharmaceutical companies to immunize its citizens.

Let us not forget that while the rich nations hoarded more doses than necessary, the developing countries, lacking the necessary resources, did not receive them.

Cuba has bet heavily on biotechnology, the development of which is undoubtedly due to the vision of the historical leader of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro, and his concern for safeguarding the health of the population.

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<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/especiales/comentarios/333341-cuba-works-to-protect-its-children-from-pneumococcal-bacteria>



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