

## News Details

### **Novel vaccine for P vivax malaria**

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Respite from the malarial scourge is in sight. The International Centre of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) in New Delhi has developed a vaccine for malaria. The clinical trial results, so far, have been encouraging. Now the vaccine, test-manufactured by the Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech, is all set to enter human clinical trials. The vaccine has the potential to prevent malaria caused by the parasite *P vivax*, transmitted through mosquito bites.

Although less fatal than *P falciparum* which is most prevalent in Africa and is the major cause of deaths from malaria, *P vivax* is more widespread and causes severe illness. Nearly 65 percent of all malaria cases in India are caused by *P vivax*. Beyond India, it is found across large swaths of Asia, Latin America, and Africa. The disease has been on the rise due to the parasite's increased resistance to a lot of commonly used anti-malarial drugs. Currently, no vaccines are licensed to protect against any form of malaria, which infects 300 to 500 million people worldwide each year, killing 2 to 3 million of the infected.

In 2001, ICGEB had entered into an agreement with the Malaria Vaccine Initiative at PATH and the biotechnology firm, Bharat Biotech to jointly develop a malaria vaccine. Today, as the new vaccine enters human trials, samples have been sent to PATH for global trials. Simultaneously, clinical investigations are being held in different parts of the world especially in India and African countries.