

News Details

Trials for rotavirus vaccine on cards

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Hyderabad, Oct. 19: ENTHUSED by the support extended by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for bringing out the rotavirus vaccine in India, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Atlanta, US, and the city based Bharat Biotech International are gearing up for conduction clinical trials for rotavirus vaccine at New Delhi under the guidance of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

Dr. Roger Glass, who heads the gastro-enteritis division at CDC Atlanta, told reporters here on Saturday that the project represented a new approach to vaccine development in which vaccine strains found in India would be prepared by Bharat Biotech for countering rotavirus, which has become a national and global priority.

Rotavirus is the most common cause of sivere diarrhoea in children worldwide, infecting children in their first few years. In India, rotavirus is responsible for over 1,00,000 deaths and 5,00,000 hospitalisations due to diarrhoea each year, making it priority for vaccine development, he said.

"The first efforts at Bharat Biotech would involve preparing pilot lots of vaccines for clinical trials which will take place in New Delhi over the next two to four years under the guidance of ICMR," Dr. Krishna Ella, CMD, Bharat Biotech, said.

Apart from CDC Atlanta, Dr. Harry Greenberg, senior associate dean, School of Medicine, Standford University, US, too is associated with the prestigious rotavirus project. Dr. Harry would look at the laboratory methodology and monitoring of clinical trials whil Dr. Roger would monitor the development of the rotavirus vaccine.

On the domestic front, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) are associated with the rotavirus vaccine project. Professor M K Bhan, who head the Department of Paediatrics, AIIMS, would look at rotavirus surveillane and conduct large-scale clinical trials. Professor C Durga Rao, who heads the Department of Microbiology and Cell Biology, IISc, would oversee the rotaviral characterisation and laboratory methodology.