

## News Details

### **Bharat Bio eyes critical care segment for growth**

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Hyderabad: City-based biotech major Bharat Biotech International Ltd is foraying into the critical care sector. It is targeting new therapeutic agents - known as epidermal growth factors - for burn victims and those undergoing cosmetic surgeries. The new therapies are aimed at expediting healing in patients suffering from burns. Bharat Biotech founder-director Suchitra Ella told The Times of India.

"The product, which is first of its kind in this part of the world, has been developed keeping in mind the medical needs of India. It is basically a therapeutic protein, which has been developed using recombinant DNA technology. We see good potential as it could be used in critical care treatments involving surgeries. The drug is undergoing phase III clinical trials and would be ready for marketing shortly," Ella said.

The product, which is likely to be introduced in the form of a cream or gel, is aimed at stimulating growth of skin cells near the area of application. This helps in reducing the treatment time for burns and injuries as new cell growth is one of the primary mechanism for healin in such cases, she said.

"Currently, there is no therapy to induce skin cell growth. Epidermal growth factor is a new concept in that sense. Normally, the body has an inhouse capability to stimulate cell growth. But as one crosses the age of 30, this capacity weans. Our product is mean for dealing with this proble. Growth factors can also be used in case of surgeries such as skin grafting, where new cell growth hastens the healing process and cuts the risk of developing scars," Ella said.

Bharat is hoping that the new product would provide an additional revenue stream for the company. Currently, the company has four products - Revac-B for hepatitis b, streptokinase drug for removing blood clots, typhoid vaccine TYPBAR, and BIOGIT, a probiotic yeast cell therapy for diarrhoea. In addition, Bharat has entered into a tie-up with US pharma giant Wyeth Lederle Ltd for the manufacture of haemophilus influenza b conjugate vaccine (HibTITER).

"We believe that the introduction of products such as BIGOIT, TYPBAR and INDIKINASE would boost our revenues this year. We are expecting a 25 per cent growth in turnover this year at Rs 50 crore from the last year's Rs 30 crore," Ella said.

Meanwhile, the company is expecting a quantum jump in its business after the rollout of the anti-diarrhoeal rotavirus vaccine and anti-malarial drug, which it is developing as part of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's vaccination programme.

"The clinical trial results of the vaccines are encouraging. It could be 18-25 months before the products are rolled ut," she said.

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