

CDC ties up with Bharat Biotech

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HYDERABAD: Even as pharma majors of the likes of E.Merck and GlaxoSmithKline have begun clinical trials for a vaccine to prevent Rotavirus, US-based scientific institutions and the Indian counterparts have tied up with the city-based Bharat Biotech International Limited for undertaking clinical trials in India. Rotavirus affects virtually all children in both developed and developing countries during the first five years of life, and Rotavirus infection is the most common cause of severe gastroenteritis. Dr Roger I Glass, who heads gastroenteritis division for Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Atlanta, GA. USA, told the press persons here on Saturday that plans are on to roll out Rotavirus vaccine here in India by utilising the facilities at Bharat Biotech International. Rotavirus affects virtually all children in both developed and developing countries during the first 5 years of life, and Rotavirus infection is the most common cause of severe gastroenteritis. "But this is a long-drawn process and it could take anywhere between 5-7 years. This a part of the Indo-US Vaccine Programme which is being funded by Bill & Melinda Gates Children Vaccine Program," Dr Roger said. Dr Krishna Ella, CMD, Bharat Biotech, said "the pilot plant for the production of Rotavirus Vaccine is almost ready and we would undertake the development and production of Rotavirus Vaccine." Apart from CDC Dr Harry Greenberg, senior Associate Dean, school of Medicine, Stanford University, USA, too is associated with the prestigious Rotavirus project. Dr Harry would look at the laboratory methodology and monitoring of clinical trails while Dr Roger would monitor the development of 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.