

# Cervical cancer jab to be included in vax programme

**Govt's likely to float  
global tender in April  
for HPV vaccine**

NEW DELHI, PTI

**T**he health ministry intends to roll out HPV vaccine against cervical cancer in the national immunisation programme for girls aged nine to 14 years in June for which a global tender is likely to be floated in April, official sources have said.

Serum Institute's made-in-India HPV vaccine "CERVAVAC" was launched by Union Home Minister Amit Shah recently, in presence of CEO Adar Poonawalla and Prakash Kumar Singh, its Director-Government and Regulatory Affairs.

"The ministry is likely to float in April a global tender for 16.02 crore doses of HPV vaccine, which will be supplied by 2026. Apart from domestic

manufacturer Serum Institute of India, global vaccine manufacturer Merck is also likely to participate in the tender," an official source said.

In July last year, India's drug regulator granted market authorisation to Serum Institute's indigenously developed HPV vaccine. It has also been cleared by National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation for use in the public health programme.

India, at present, is fully dependent on foreign manufacturers for HPV vaccines. Globally, three foreign firms manufacture HPV vaccines out of which two sell their doses in India.

Each dose of the vaccine available in the market costs more than Rs 4,000, sources said. In September 2022, Poonawalla had said each dose of its "CERVAVAC" vaccine would cost Rs 200 to Rs 400.

India, which is home to about 16% of the world's women, accounts for about a quarter of all cervical cancer incidences and nearly a third of global cervical cancer deaths.