

2-DOSE VIAL OF CERVAVAC COSTS RS 4,000

First indigenous vaccine for cervical cancer in pvt market

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CERVAVAC — THE first indigenous vaccine against cervical cancer — developed and manufactured by city-based Serum Institute of India (SII) is now available in the private market.

The vaccine is expected to be rolled out in the government sector by the end of this year.

Sources in the SII said they have a 2-3 million dose production capacity and a single dose of the two-dose vial is priced at Rs 2,000 in the market.

Cervical cancer is the second most prevalent common cancer in India. The country accounts for nearly one-fifth of the global burden of cervical cancer.

Every year, 1.23 lakh new cases and around 77,000 deaths are re-

**Serum Institute of
India (SII) developed
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vaccine — Cervavac**

ported in India.

Dr Smita Joshi, principal investigator for Serum Institute of India's HPV vaccine study at Ruby Hall Clinic, said HPV vaccination of adolescent girls and cervical cancer screening of adult women using an HPV test are the two tools available to prevent cervical cancer.

"It kills one woman every eight minutes in the country and all women aged 30-60 must get screened with an HPV test, which is more accurate than the pap smear for cervical cancer even if they have no symptoms. They must also get their adolescent

daughters vaccinated with the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine," said Dr Joshi.

Cervavac is manufactured by SII — the world's largest vaccine manufacturer — in association with the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology along with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

"The SII's vaccine is approved in India for girls aged nine to 26 and is priced relatively lesser than Merck's HPV vaccine," Dr Joshi said.

Cervavac is the first home-grown Indian HPV vaccine for preventing cervical cancer. It acts against four different types of HPV — HPV 6, 11, 16 and 18 — and is hence known as a quadrivalent vaccine.

The SII had started phase 2 and 3 clinical trials of the HPV vaccine in multiple centres across the country in 2018.

In July 2022, the Drugs Controller General of India granted market authorisation to SII. In September last year, Dr Jitendra Singh, Union Ministry of State (Independent charge) science and technology, announced the scientific completion of the quadrivalent human papillomavirus vaccine (qHPV) in the presence of SII CEO Adar Poonawalla and others.

Cervavac's two-dose vial is available at Rs 4,000.

Official sources said the vaccine has been sent to hospitals in the country.

The other two international vaccines which are currently available are Gardasil — a quadrivalent vaccine marketed by Merck, and Cervarix, a bivalent vaccine marketed by GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals Limited.

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