Dengue vaccine to hit market by 2015

DY Patil Hospital was also selected for the national clinical trial

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The tetravalent dengue vaccine clinical trial, conducted in India by Sanofi, the French drug company, for the first time, has been successful. The company, which is currently conducting phase III clinical trials in many other countries, has conducted phase II trial in five different sites or cities across India, including Pune.

Dengue, a vector-borne disease, had affected a large number of people in Pune this year, leading to an alarming rise in hospitalisation and increase in critical cases as well. But soon, a vaccine against the infection is expected to hit the market. Already in its advanced stages, it would be available worldwide by the middle of next year, said a Sanofi spokesperson.

Pune’s DY Patil Hospital was one of the sites selected for the national clinical trial by Sanofi and Sharad Agarkhedkar, head of the paediatric department, told Mirror, “The study took almost 25 months to reach its conclusion. From Pune, 47 subjects were enrolled and we saw that those administered the vaccine showed more than 60 per cent efficacy rate.” Other sites selected by Sanofi for trials were Ludhiana, Kolkata, Bangalore and New Delhi.

“We had 189 subjects from India and from five different sites for the same study that tested the immunogenicity and safety of the tetravalent dengue vaccine. We noticed that its efficacy was more than 60 per cent and most of the population were able to fight the infection,” the spokesperson pointed out.

“India is part of our global development strategy for a dengue vaccine. The dengue phase III study will be conducted on a large age group, comprising children, adolescents and adults. As soon as the clinical trial protocol is finalised, it will be submitted to the Drug Controller General of India for approval so that the third trial can be kick-started. This is a requirement before the vaccine is registered and eventually launched in the Indian market,” he added.

“We at Sanofi are working towards meeting WHO’s objectives to reduce dengue mortality by 50 per cent and morbidity by 25 per cent by 2020. Hopefully, this vaccine will help in bringing down death toll caused by dengue, too,” the spokesperson further stated.