

# Dengue vaccine to be tested in India

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French health care giant Sanofi Pasteur will soon test a vaccine against dengue fever in India amid concerns about the increasingly global spread of the disease, reports said Monday.

The vaccine will be tried on about 120 adults followed by trials on children before it can be made available internationally as soon as 2015, the Times of India newspaper said.

"Sites for the vaccine's final trials will stretch from Thailand to India as this vaccine has to work on populations across countries. We will test it in India soon," Sanofi's CEO Christopher Viehbacher was quoted as saying.

Dengue causes a flu-like illness for most victims but one of its strains can cause life-threatening internal bleeding.

There is no licensed vaccine to protect against dengue. Efforts to develop one have been complicated by the fact that there are four different strains, all of which may circulate in an outbreak zone.

Dengue also seems to be exclusive to humans, which means it is impossible to test vaccines on [lab animals](#) first.

Jean Lang, head of the vaccine's research and development programme, said Sanofi had been asked to conduct "phase two safety trials" in India by the national drug controller.

"It will help us get a licence to market the [vaccine](#) in India faster if it has been tested on the Indian population and is found safe and effective," Lang told the paper.

According to the UN's [World Health Organisation](#), between 50 and 100 million dengue infections occur each year in more than 100 countries. In 1970 the disease was endemic in just nine countries.

India, with a teeming population of 1.2 billion, has become a major focal point for the mosquito-borne viral infection.

Between 2007 and this month, the country has had 32,263 dengue cases with 188 deaths, according to the National [Vector Borne Disease](#) Control Programme. Experts say the real numbers are much higher.

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