

Brazil to launch vaccination campaign as dengue surges

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Brazil will start a vaccination campaign against dengue fever in February, authorities said, as a sharp rise in cases of the potentially deadly disease raised fears of a runaway outbreak.

The country of 203 million people, which approved the new "Qdenga" vaccine in December, will be the first in the world to offer it through the public health system, officials said.

However, the number of available doses remains limited by a shortage of supply from its developer, Japanese pharmaceutical company Takeda, Brazil's health ministry said.

"The first shipment of 750,000 doses of the anti-dengue vaccine has arrived in Brazil," the ministry said in a statement Sunday.

In all, Brazil expects to receive 6.5 million doses this year of the two-dose vaccine, which is tailored for children.

The World Health Organization recommended last year that Qdenga be issued to children ages six to 16 in dengue hotspots.

The European Union, Indonesia and Thailand have also approved the vaccine.

Brazil saw a 57-percent increase in dengue cases last year from 2022. And it registered 56,000 cases in the first two weeks of 2024, double the number from 2023.

Six people have died of the disease so far this year in the South American country.

Mosquito-borne dengue, which can cause [hemorrhagic fever](#), infects an estimated 100 million to 400 million people yearly, although most cases are mild or asymptomatic, the WHO says.

Climate change may be helping the disease spread. A recent report in the [medical journal](#) *The Lancet* found dengue transmission will increase by

36 percent if global temperatures rise two degrees Celsius by 2100.

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