



HPV Vaccine for Cervical Cancer

Why in News?

India is expected to **roll out the indigenously developed [CERVAVAC vaccine](#) for the prevention of cervical cancer among girls aged 9-14 years** through their schools by mid-2023.

- The decision was based on the **National Technical Advisory Group for Immunisation (NTAGI)** recommendation **to introduce the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine** in the [Universal Immunisation Programme](#).

What is CERVAVAC?

- **About:**
 - It is **India's first indigenously developed quadrivalent human papillomavirus (qHPV) vaccine** that is said to be **effective against four strains of the virus - Type 6, Type 11, Type 16 and Type 18.**
 - A quadrivalent vaccine is a vaccine that works by stimulating an **immune response against four different antigens**, such as four different viruses or other microorganisms.
 - CERVAVAC is based on **VLP (Virus-Like Particles)**, similar to the [Hepatitis B](#) vaccination.
- **Approval:**
 - The vaccine has **received the [Drugs Controller General of India's approval](#)** and has been **cleared by the government advisory panel NTAGI for use in the public health programme.**
- **Significance:**
 - It has a significant potential to **eliminate cervical cancer** and it would be helpful if included in national HPV vaccination efforts and offered at a **lower cost** than existing vaccinations.
 - The vaccine is extremely **effective only when it's administered before the first sexual intercourse.**

What is Cervical Cancer?

- Cervical cancer develops in a **woman's cervix**. It is the **4th most common type of cancer among women, globally and 2nd most common among women in India.**
 - **India contributes the largest share of the global cervical cancer burden;** nearly 1 in every 4 deaths globally due to cervical cancer (as per The Lancet study).
- Almost all cervical cancer cases (**99%**) **are linked to infection with high-risk HPV**, an extremely common virus **transmitted through sexual contact.**
 - Effective primary (HPV vaccination) and secondary prevention approaches (screening for and treating precancerous lesions) will prevent most cervical cancer cases.
- When diagnosed, cervical cancer is **one of the most successfully treatable forms of cancer**, as long as it is detected early and managed effectively.
 - Cancers diagnosed in late stages can also be controlled with appropriate treatment and palliative care.
 - With a comprehensive approach to prevent, screen and treat, **cervical cancer can be**

eliminated as a public health problem within a generation.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. 'Mission Indradhanush' launched by the Government of India pertains to (2016)

- (a) immunization of children and pregnant women
- (b) construction of smart cities across the country
- (c) India's own search for the Earth-like planets in outer space
- (d) New Educational Policy

Ans: (a)

Exp:

- Mission Indradhanush is an immunization scheme launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, GoI on 25th December, 2014.
- Depicting seven colours of the rainbow, it aimed to cover all those children by 2020 who are either unvaccinated, or are partially vaccinated against seven vaccine preventable diseases which include diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, polio, tuberculosis, measles and hepatitis B.
- The mission is technically supported by WHO, UNICEF, Rotary International and other donor partners.
- **Therefore, option (a) is the correct answer.**

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