

Bharat Bio launches first indigenous single-shot against 5 diseases

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Bharat Biotech International Limited, a Hyderabad-based manufacturer of vaccines and biotherapeutics, on Monday launched COMVAC5, a single-shot pentavalent combination vaccine which contains the first indigenously developed and manufactured haemophilus influenza type-b (Hib) vaccine in India and the only Hepatitis B vaccine in the world to be manufactured without the use of cesium chloride.

COMVAC5, which contains diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus and Hepatitis B, and Hib, offers complete protection against Hib antigen bacterium. Hib can cause meningitis and severe pneumonia, leading to about 3 million cases of serious illness and 400,000 deaths each year in children under 5 years of age.

COMVAC5 also provides protection against Hepatitis B virus, which causes severe disease of the liver causing an estimated 5.7 million cases of acute hepatitis B infection and more than 521 000 deaths from hepatitis B-related disease.

"Combination pentavalent vaccines come highly recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and other global regulatory agencies since they combine 5 antigens into a single dose, thus eliminating the need for multiple injections to infants. Reduction of injections to infants has proven to reduce the amount of side effects, and reduce the probability of disease transmission through needle contamination," Krishna M Ella, chairman and managing director of Bharat Biotech, stated in a press release on Monday.