

Cuba to Release Cholera Vaccine by 2015



Havana, November 24 (RHC) -- Cuba will release a new preventive vaccine against cholera in 2015, the state-owned pharmaceutical group that is developing the drug announced Sunday.

Gustavo Sierra Gonzalez, Vice President of BioCubaFarma, told the daily newspaper *Juventud Rebelde* that the clinical trials had been very successful, and that the official registration of the drug is expected next year.

Gonzalez said that the Cuban population would be vaccinated and that the drug would also be provided to the World Health Organization (WHO) for global usage. Although a few cases of the disease were reported on the island, public health officials were able to control it rapidly and prevent its spread.

The export of medicine and medical equipment represent about \$900 million every year for the island, making it the second biggest export industry for Cuba after nickel.

Cuban medical research has already developed four vaccines, including a vaccine against advanced lung cancer developed in 2012 with clinical tests carried out in over 80 countries. Although the drug does not cure cancer, the tumors have been found to reduce their size, improving the overall health and life expectancy of the patients.

The Molecular Immunology Center, located in Havana, also created the Meningitis-B vaccine in 1985, as well as for Hepatitis-B and Dengue later on.

According to a 2010 Science Magazine article, written by Stanford University scientists Paul K. Drain and Michele Barry, Cuba had better health indicators than the United States, with 20 times less resources per capita, thanks to effective preventive approaches and a pharmaceutical model that is not based on profit.

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