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**Swine flu vaccine: Cadila plan hits roadblock**

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**New Delhi :** Ahmedabad-Based Cadila Pharmaceuticals' plans to indigenously develop swine flu vaccine in collaboration with US-based Novavax are likely to be delayed. The government has shown caution in giving the go-ahead for the trials. "We have not given approval (for clinical trials) to Cadila yet as they are using a new technology called virus like particles (VLP). We are still studying the process... and it would take some more time before we decide on that," said Drug Controller General of India Surinder Singh.

Last year, Cadila along with four other companies, Zydus Cadila, Bharat Biotech, Panacea Biotech and Serum Institute, had applied for the health regulator's permission for conducting trials in India.

All other Indian firms except Cadila have received the permission and started the trials. Singh said globally there is only one vaccine that uses VLP technology. So, the company needs to substantiate the new technology's credentials, he added. "We are still looking at the data they gave us for the trials conducted in Mexico, but other Indian companies are using traditional methods to develop the vaccines. We need to be very cautious," Singh said.

An email query sent to the company remained unanswered. According to industry sources, it will take at least three months more for the Indian firms to develop the vaccines. Their shots will be available in the market by this April.

For meeting the immediate requirements in India, the government has placed the order for 1.5 million doses of imported vaccines.