

Covaxin neutralises new strains: Biotech

Cites Study To Say Vax Works Against B.1.617

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Hyderabad:

Indigenous Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin is effective in fighting all key emerging variants, including the double mutant B.1.617 and B.1.1.7, which was first identified in India and the UK, its developer Bharat Biotech said on Sunday while citing a study published in an Oxford journal.

Pointing out that Covaxin was successful in retaining neutralising activity against emerging variants, a top official of the company said that no difference in neutralisation was observed between B.1.1.7 (first isolated in the UK) and the vaccine strain (D614G) that was used to develop Covaxin.

Citing a study published in peer-reviewed medical journal Clinical Infectious Diseases, Bharat Biotech joint managing director Suchitra Ella tweeted: “A modest reduction in neutralisation by a factor of 1.95 was observed against B.1.617 variant compared to the vaccine variant (D614G). Despite this reduction, neutralising titre (concentration of neutralising antibodies) levels with B.1.617 remain above levels expected to be protective.”

Neutralising antibodies are part of the body’s immune system and helps defend from viruses and bacteria by neutralising their effects on the body. These antibodies are produced when one gets infected or vaccinated.

The study, ‘Neutralisation of variant under investigation B.1.617 with sera of BBV152 vaccinees’, was covered in the May 7 issue of the journal that is published by the Oxford University Press.

The study found that the sera drawn from those vaccinated with Covaxin performed better against the B.1.617 variant as compared to the sera taken from patients who had recovered from Covid.

“B.1.617 variant performance with vaccine sera was better than recovered cases. The result of B.1.1.7 variant neutralization with BBV152 vaccine sera and findings of B.1.617 emphasize that this vaccine is robust against emerging mutation and maintains the efficacy of the vaccine,” the research paper said.



A health worker administers a dose of a Covid vaccine in Bengaluru