

Cipla inks pact with Merck

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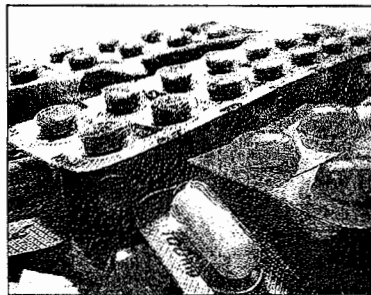
Mumbai, Feb. 20: Cipla has entered into an agreement with MSD to market the latter's anti-HIV drug raltegravir in the country.

This is the first time that Cipla is entering into a strategic partnership with a multinational drug company. MSD is the trade name of Merck & Co., Inc.

Under the India-specific arrangement, Cipla will have a non-exclusive licence to market, promote and distribute MSD's raltegravir 400mg tablet under a different brand name.

Cipla is yet to finalise the price of the drug, which will be available in India from the middle of this year.

Cipla hopes that its extensive marketing and sales operations and its expertise in the anti-HIV/AIDS segment will increase the drug's reach in the country.



DRUG DEAL

The company also indicated that it might enter into more such collaborations to bring in life-saving drugs. Access to raltegravir is important for patients receiving third line salvage therapy.

"This partnership reinforces Cipla's ongoing commitment to HIV/AIDS treat-

ment making life-saving drugs accessible. Raltegravir, a third line therapy treatment, will be a value-addition to Cipla's portfolio of HIV/AIDS treatment, especially for those patients who are resistant to the first and second line therapy treatment," Jaideep Gogtay, chief medical officer at Cipla, said.

Third line salvage therapy is a form of treatment used for people with few drug options.

Agila recall

Agila Specialties, now a part of Mylan, is recalling 10 lots of Etomidate injection, used in general anaesthesia in the US because of the presence of small black particles in vials and inappropriate labeling.

The company, formerly a part of Bangalore-based Strides Acrolab, had initiated the nationwide voluntary recall on February 14.

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International Cooperation.