

Alliance set to buy millions of Ebola vaccine doses

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A major vaccine alliance said Thursday it planned to purchase millions of Ebola vaccine doses as soon as a safe and effective one is found.

The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation, which helps make vaccines available to developing countries, said it would be ready to act as soon as the World Health Organization recommends a safe [vaccine](#) against the virus, that has so far killed nearly 6,400 people.

There is no licensed treatment or vaccine for Ebola, and the WHO has endorsed rushing potential ones through trials in a bid to stem the epidemic, raging mainly in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Gavi said it planned to spend up to \$300 million to procure the vaccines, which would be used to immunise at-risk populations in affected countries.

It said it would spend another \$90 million to support countries to introduce the vaccines, rebuild their devastated health systems and help restore immunisation services for all vaccines in Ebola-affected countries.

"Plans to purchase millions of doses of an Ebola vaccine to support large-scale vaccination efforts were today agreed by the board," it said in a statement.

Two [experimental vaccines](#) are currently undergoing clinical trials in a

number of countries: VSV-ZEBOV manufactured by the Public Health Agency of Canada and licenced by US firm NewLink Genetics, and ChAd3 made by Britain's GlaxoSmithKline.

Trials of VSV-ZEBOV at the Geneva University Hospital were meanwhile suspended Thursday, after four of the volunteers experienced unexpected side effects, including joint pains.

The hospital said the side effects did not appear serious, but that it was launching an in-depth study to ensure the safety of the volunteers.

The trials are set to resume on January 5.

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