

Himalaya Drug positions Liv. 52 HB as safe and cost effective for India's 4 crore HBV patients

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Himalaya Drug Company's Liv. 52 HB is India's first US patent pending herbal formulation for Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) infection. The company's extensive clinical studies on Liv. 52 HB have revealed that the efficacy rate is comparable to that of the current available treatments without any side effects, even after long-term administration. But the key decision for safe treatment options for the scores of patients in India and the developing world is based on affordability.

"Cost of a course of treatment for HBV is between Rs.10,000 and Rs.1 lakh with any of the antivirals, immunoglobulins and interferons drugs. But with Liv. 52 HB, the entire cost of a six-month treatment is only Rs.4,680!" stated Philippe Haydon, CEO, Pharmaceutical Division, The Himalaya Drug Company.

The company's flagship brand, Liv. 52 is already widely prescribed for Hepatitis A and Liv. 52 HB was developed only to cater to the growing incidence of 4 crore patients being affected with HBV. Research for Himalaya's HBV infection drug began over a decade ago. The company screened over 100 herbs before finding the right composition to treat HBV infection.

Studies on Liv. 52 HB have been published in Antiviral Research and World Journal of Gastroenterology, amongst others. The drug exerts antiviral activity and enhances the antioxidant defence system, stated Haydon.

The staggering statistics on the incidence of HBV in India emphasizes the need for a breakthrough cure that is effective, safe and affordable. Ayurveda, one of the oldest systems of traditional medicine, perhaps holds the key. Currently, the efficacy rate for allopathic treatments is roughly 30 per cent. Liv. 52 HB is a herbal remedy which helps restore liver functions and works at an efficacy rate comparable to allopathic treatments. Going by the acceptability of traditional medicine to treat various ailments and lifestyle-related disorders, Ayurveda, could provide answers for several critical health concerns, informed Dr Pralhad Patki, head, Medical Services & Clinical Trials, The Himalaya Drug Company.

Current available drugs to treat HBV are known for serious side effects like nephrotoxicity, neurovegetative symptoms and anaemia. Drug resistance is extremely common during or after the treatment. These factors increase the cost of treatment. In the case of Liv. 52 HB, there is higher efficacy rates comparable to available allopathic treatments, no side effects and its pricing contributes to its cost efficiency, pointed out Dr Patki.

According to ORG-MIS September 2011, HBV infection treatment market size in India is Rs.216 crore, growing at 21 per cent.