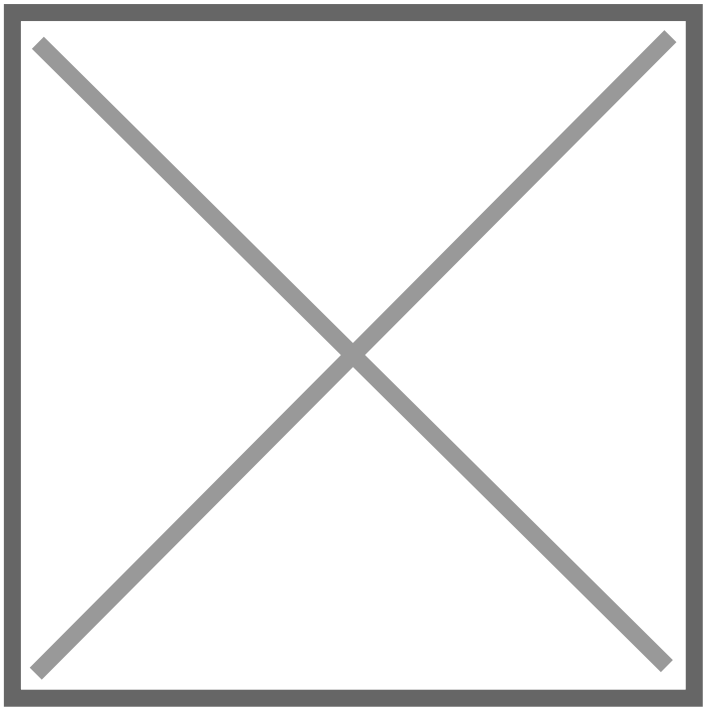
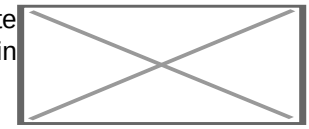
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Biocon to start clinical trials for diabetic drug

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The Bangalore based Biocon India Ltd is planning to try out the applications of mycophenolate mofetil, an immunosuppressive drug for the treatment of diabetic nephropathy, a stage wherein diabetic patients end up with renal malfunctions.



Biocon is expected to start limited clinical trials soon to try out the extended usage of the molecule in collaboration with the MS Ramaiah Hospital, Bangalore. It has already received the necessary approvals from the Drugs Controller of India and the ethics committee to go ahead with the trials. Mycophenolate mofetil is widely used in organ transplantation to prevent the allograft rejection. It is gaining rapid acceptance on account of its low cytotoxic profile compared with conventional immunosuppressants. Recent studies have indicated that mycophenolate which has a good safety profile could retard the progression of diabetic nephropathy.

Biocon India is the only Indian manufacturer which is into this fermentation-derived drug. The trials will be carried out by a group of the medical investigators. Trial results are expected to take 9-12 months.

Roche which holds the marketing rights for mycophenolate mofetil, does not have the interest to try out extended usage. Hence, Biocon India has been trying to carry out trials in a small way. It is estimated that diabetic nephropathy affects nearly 30 percent of the diabetics and India has a diabetic population of nearly 32 million.