

Chinese vaccine seeks regulatory approval in Brazil

8 January 2021



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Chinese pharmaceutical firm Sinovac's local partner in Brazil applied Friday for emergency authorization for its COVID-19 vaccine, the first to seek regulatory approval in the hard-hit country, officials said.

Federal health regulator Anvisa now has 10 days to respond to the application from the Butantan Institute, a public health center in Sao Paulo that is working with Sinovac to test and produce the CoronaVac [vaccine](#).

The application came a day after officials announced CoronaVac had shown effectiveness of 78 percent in [clinical trials](#) in Brazil, news that Sao Paulo Governor Joao Doria called "historic."

Sinovac has not yet released worldwide results from the final stage of clinical trials, which are also being carried out in Chile, Indonesia and Turkey.

The company has faced criticism for not supplying full data.

In Brazil, CoronaVac has been caught up in a political battle between Doria and far-right President Jair Bolsonaro, likely opponents in [presidential elections](#) next year.

Doria pushed for a deal to test and produce the vaccine in Brazil. But Bolsonaro, who says he does not plan to be vaccinated himself, has derided it as "Joao Doria's Chinese vaccine."

The [federal government](#) instead struck a deal to secure the vaccine developed by Britain's Oxford University and British-Swedish pharmaceutical firm AstraZeneca.

But it is scrambling to purchase enough doses for Brazil's population of 212 million, and faces criticism for a delay in setting the start date for its vaccination campaign.

After initially dismissing CoronaVac, Brazil's health ministry announced Thursday it had signed a deal with the Butantan Institute for 100 million doses of the vaccine for use nationwide.

Brazil has the second-highest death toll in the pandemic, after the United States, with more than 200,000 people killed by COVID-19.

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APA citation: Chinese vaccine seeks regulatory approval in Brazil (2021, January 8) retrieved 23 April 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-01-chinese-vaccine-regulatory-brazil.html>

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