

# FierceVaccines

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## Abivax eyes \$49M IPO to advance Cuban-made hep B vaccine

[Abivax](#), a Paris-based biotech that acquired the rights to three commercial, Cuban-made vaccines in November, is gearing up for a €43.6 million (\$49 million) IPO to take its [hepatitis B](#) candidate into Phase III. The cash will also go toward an [HIV](#) drug.

The hep B candidate was picked up from Cuba's Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology. Abivax is running a Phase IIb/III trial for the therapeutic vaccine--dubbed ABX203--in the Asia Pacific. The vaccine is made up of HBc and HBs recombinant proteins to trigger an immune response. It can control viral load for a "much longer period of time" when compared to the standard of care, the company said in a statement.

ABX203 has delivered interim data that shows it has "real advantages" to the treatment of hepatitis B, the company said. An estimated 2 billion people suffer from hep B worldwide, with 350 million with the chronic form of the disease.

The vaccine could hit the market as early as 2017, according to the statement.

As for its three commercial vaccines, Abivax acquired them from the Finlay Institute of Havana. They target typhoid, meningococcus and Leptospirosis. The company's relationships with the two Cuban entities have strengthened its product pipeline as well as allow it broad access to Cuban R&D. Cuban products cannot be sold in the U.S. But if the trade embargo on Cuba is ever lifted, Abivax CEO Hartmut Ehrlich indicated the company would be interested in gaining the rights to market ABX203 in the U.S.