US allows new' Aids vaccine testing

WASHINGTON. Friday

The US government has approved

the first human tests of a vaccine

against the AIDS virus, researchers

said today.

Ms Julia Hurwitz and Ms Karen

Slobod of St Jude Children's Research

Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee

said the US Food and Drug

Administration (FDA) had given them the go-ahead to start safety

trials in human volunteers.

They said they would be recruiting

between 9 and 18 healthy

volunteers for the Phase 1 clinical

trial, which focuses on safety

alone and not on whether the vaccine

works.

The St. Jude vaccine uses part

of the outer protein coating of the human immunodeficiency virus

(HIV). The researchers are using

23 different envelopes, each contained

in a smallpox vaccine.

The idea is to trigger the body's

immune system so it will attack

the virus, without introducing any

dangerous parts of the virus that

could become infectious.

(Reuters)