Vaccines and COVID-19

What We Know About Vaccines for the Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2

There is currently no vaccine to protect against SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19), but progress is underway. In mid-May 2020 the Trump Administration introduced “Operation Warp Speed”, a private-public partnership with drug and biotechnology companies. The initiative is designed to accelerate the development of a COVID-19 vaccine and delivery of millions of doses to Americans by January 2021.

Every vaccine is evaluated for safety and ability to protect an individual from a developing a disease. Typically this process from initial discovery to fully-scaled release takes multiple years (see box below for more information on vaccine development). Due to the risk of COVID-19 to health and healthcare systems, the vaccine discovery process is being accelerated. Some timelines estimate COVID-19 vaccine will be available in as soon as 12-18 months.

Operation Warp Speed has identified 14 promising vaccines and in June advanced 5 firms to continuing trials: Moderna/National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), Oxford University/Astra Zeneca, Johnson & Johnson, Merck, and Pfizer. Worldwide over 120 different potential vaccines have been proposed, and the World Health Organization (WHO) has chosen 10 to move to small clinical trials. Two vaccines from Operation Warp Speed trials (Moderna/NIAID and Oxford University/Astra Zeneca) are being considered by the WHO. We do not know if vaccines developed abroad will be approved for use in the US.

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Exploratory Studies  →  Pre-clinical Studies  →  Clinical development
• Phase 1-4 Trials  →  Regulatory Review and Approval  →  Manufacturing  →  Quality Control

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We do not know what a COVID-19 vaccine will look like yet or how effective it will be. The number of doses required and specific rules for how a vaccine is administered will be determined by various federal agencies and independent groups, including the Centers for Disease Control, who consult their Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and other medical organizations. When a vaccine is available, you may be able to receive it for no or little cost through the CARES Act.

Keeping up with Routine Vaccines

COVID-19 has made many aspects of daily life more challenging, including going to a healthcare provider. It is important that you still receive routine vaccines [for example, diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTap or Tdap), part of the childhood immunization schedule] to make sure you and your family are safe and healthy.

- Many providers have set up special procedures to keep you safe while going to a visit, including having you wait in your car until the appointment time and screening you for symptoms before the visit.
- Contact your local healthcare provider or clinic if you or your child need to get a routine vaccine.

A vaccine may not be available for 12-18 months. Until then you should take recommended precautions to avoid getting COVID-19.

WASH YOUR HANDS
Use soap and water or an alcohol-based sanitizer

STAY 6 FEET APART

WEAR A CLOTH FACE COVERING
in public or when sick

Disclaimer:
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