

Universal flu vaccine successfully tested: report

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Scientists in Britain have successfully tested a vaccine which could work against all known flu strains, the Guardian newspaper reported Monday.

The new vaccine, developed by scientists at Oxford University, differs from traditional treatments by targeting proteins inside the [flu virus](#) rather than proteins on the flu's external coat.

The two proteins within the virus are similar across strains and less likely to mutate, meaning new vaccines would not have to be developed for each new strain of the illness.

Traditional vaccines stimulate the body to produce [antibodies](#) to fight the flu, whereas the new treatment, developed by a team led by Sarah Gilbert, boosts the production of T-cells, which identify and kill infected cells.

"Fewer of the people who were vaccinated got flu than the people who weren't vaccinated," said Gilbert.

"We did get an indication that the vaccine was protecting people, not only from the numbers of people who got flu but also from looking at their T-cells before we gave them flu.

"The volunteers we vaccinated had T-cells that were activated, primed and ready to kill."

If successfully developed, the new vaccine could prevent outbreaks such as the recent swine [flu](#) pandemic, which cost the British government £1.2 billion (\$1.9 billion, 1.4 billion euros) in vaccine preparation.

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