

Roche teams up with Atea in US on oral coronavirus treatment

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Swiss pharmaceuticals giant Roche said Thursday it is collaborating with Atea Pharmaceuticals on the development of an orally administered drug to treat coronavirus patients who have not been hospitalised.

"Roche and Atea Pharmaceuticals are joining forces in the fight against COVID-19 to develop, manufacture and distribute AT-527, Atea's investigational oral direct-acting antiviral, to people around the globe," the two companies said in a joint statement.

AT-527 is currently being tested in phase 2 [clinical trials](#) for use as a treatment for people hospitalised with moderate cases of coronavirus.

And phase 3 trials—the last stage before an application can be made for a new drug to be approved and sold on the market—are to be held in the [first quarter](#) of 2021 where it will be tested on patients outside a [hospital setting](#), Roche said.

"AT-527, while being a potential oral treatment option for hospitalised patients, also holds the potential to be the first oral treatment option for COVID-19 patients that are not hospitalised," the statement said.

"If successful, AT-527 could help treat patients early, reduce the progression of the infection, and contribute to decreasing the overall burden on [health systems](#)."

Under the terms of the agreement, the drug, if approved by the relevant authorities, will be distributed in the US by Atea and in the rest of the world by Roche.

Financial details of the deal were not disclosed.

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