

French, US drug firms team up for Covid-flu shot

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The Sanofi-Novavax vaccine deal is worth up to \$1.2 billion.

French pharmaceutical giant Sanofi and struggling US rival Novavax announced Friday an alliance to sell a COVID vaccine and develop another that combines with a flu shot.

Under a licensing deal worth up to \$1.2 billion, the companies will co-commercialize Novavax's COVID-19 vaccine worldwide, except in some countries including India, Japan and South Korea, where the US firm already has partnership agreements.

Novavax will receive an upfront payment of \$500 million and up to \$700 million if it reaches certain milestones while Sanofi will take a five percent stake in the US company.

Sanofi will book sales of Novavax's protein-based COVID-19 vaccine from 2025.

The French group will be able to develop a combination flu-COVID vaccine using its own flu shots with the US company's COVID jab.

The announcement comes as [pharmaceutical companies](#) have reported drops in sales for COVID vaccines.

Novavax, which is highly dependent on its COVID vaccine, raised doubts last year about its ability to continue its business.

The Maryland-based firm was an early frontrunner in the global vaccine race, but fell behind after being hit by manufacturing and regulatory delays.

For Sanofi, the deal is a chance to develop a combination flu-COVID jab.

"With flu and COVID-19 hospital admission rates now closely mirroring

each other, we have an opportunity to develop non-mRNA flu-COVID-19 combination vaccines offering patients both enhanced convenience and protection against two serious respiratory viruses," said Jean-Francois Toussaint, Sanofi's global head of vaccine research and development.

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