

Pfizer reports encouraging, very early vaccine test results

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In this May 4, 2020 photo provided by the University of Maryland School of Medicine, the first patient enrolled in Pfizer's COVID-19 coronavirus vaccine clinical trial at the University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore, receives an injection. The first of four experimental COVID-19 vaccines being tested by Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech showed encouraging results in very early testing of 45 people, the companies said Wednesday, July 1, 2020. (University of Maryland School of Medicine via AP)

The first of four experimental COVID-19 vaccines being tested by Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech showed encouraging results in very early testing of 45 people, the companies said Wednesday.

Study volunteers given either a low or medium dose, in two shots about a month apart, had immune responses in the range expected to be protective, when compared to some COVID-19 survivors, according to the preliminary results.

Side effects were typical for vaccines, mostly pain at the injection site and fever.

The report has been submitted for publication in a

scientific journal but not yet reviewed. With its other [potential candidates](#) still in the earliest stage of testing, Pfizer aims to open a large-scale study this summer but can't yet say which shot is best to include.

But researchers didn't administer a second shot of the highest dose initially tested, sticking with the low and medium doses. The higher-dose shot caused more injection reactions without apparent added benefit.

About 15 different COVID-19 [vaccine candidates](#) are in human testing worldwide, with several poised to begin huge, last-stage studies to prove if they really work.

Different companies are pursuing different types of vaccines, boosting the odds that at least one approach might work—although there's no guarantee. The Pfizer and BioNTech candidates use a piece of the coronavirus [genetic code](#) to prime the body to recognize and attack the virus.

Earlier this week, Inovio Pharmaceuticals issued a news release saying its gene-based [vaccine](#) candidate showed encouraging results in similar early testing in 40 volunteers.

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