

Discover & Deliver: Warp Speed Ahead for Promising COVID Vaccine Candidates

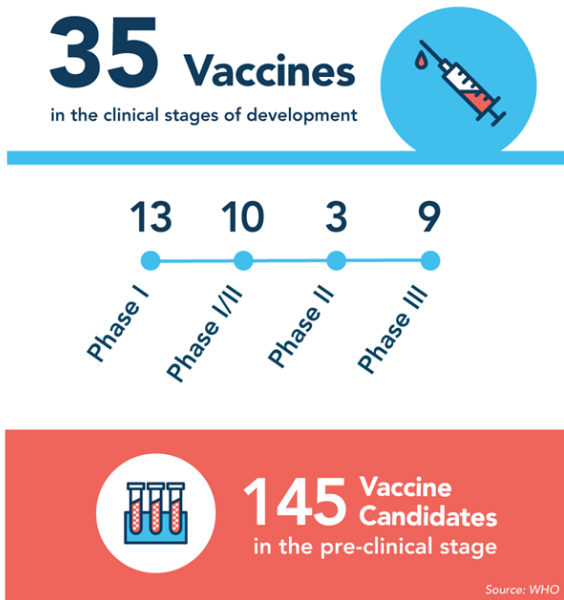
Over the last six months, the science to identify a coronavirus vaccine has advanced at warp speed. According to the World Health Organization, there are currently [35 vaccines in the clinical stage](#) of evaluation, with another 145 in the preclinical phase.

What's new: Just last week, AstraZeneca announced it was [pausing the clinical trial](#) for its Phase III vaccine candidate due to an adverse reaction with one of the trial's participants.

While the announcement of the of clinical trial's pause drew widespread media attention, the Director of the National Institutes of Health, Dr. Francis Collins, noted that [placing a hold on a clinical trial](#) – which routinely occurs during clinical research – “ought to be reassuring.”

Why? It illustrates that the companies will continue to follow the science to identify an effective vaccine. And those companies remain committed to adhering to the highest scientific standards, even though the innovative community knows all too well that time is of the essence.

This Saturday, AstraZeneca's [clinical trial resumed](#) in the UK after the regulatory authority deemed it safe to restart the study.



What's next: While the AstraZeneca trial received extensive coverage in the last week, two other importance vaccine developments should not be overlooked.

On Saturday, Pfizer announced they are [seeking regulatory approval](#) to expand the Phase III clinical trial to recruit 44,000 participants in order to ensure the trial is sufficiently diverse.

Meanwhile, Merck – one the companies selected to be part of Operation Warp Speed given the vast promise of their vaccine candidates – announced the company will start its Phase I/II trial for one of its two COVID-19 vaccines.

The bottom line: Creating incentives for companies to continue to invest in innovation is now more important than ever. This is why the Chamber is [urging the administration](#) to reconsider its misguided policy to import price controls from foreign countries.

Six months into the global pandemic, the stakes are simply too high for the U.S. government to move forward with policies that will substantially reduce investment in new drugs and cures at this critical time.

–Jonathan Weinberger, Executive Vice President, Global Innovation Policy Center