

## COVID-19 Vaccine Innovators Hit the House Floor

Next Tuesday, July 21, the House Energy and Commerce Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee will [hold a hearing](#) with some of the innovative biopharmaceutical companies leading the coronavirus vaccine race. The companies will discuss their research and development efforts, as well as their ongoing preparations to manufacture and distribute resulting solutions.

Ahead of the hearing, let's look at what we know about those efforts and preparations already.

Right now, there are two vaccine candidates in Phase 3 clinical trials – one is the result of a partnership between **AstraZeneca** and the University of Oxford. The University of Oxford recently [embarked on a trial](#) with 5,000 volunteers in Brazil – a coronavirus hotspot – to test efficacy of their vaccine candidate. Preliminary results are expected as soon as October.

Just yesterday, [Moderna published data](#) in the *New England Journal of Medicine* which showed that their vaccine produced an immune response in a Phase 1 study. The company will begin a Phase 3 trial testing the vaccine in 30,000 participants on July 27.

Other companies are tracking closely behind.

**Merck** plans to utilize its long-standing leadership in vaccine development to address COVID-19. CEO Ken Frazier [recently noted](#) that “In the last quarter century, there have only been seven truly new vaccines introduced globally at the clinical practice... Merck has four.” The company soon hopes to add a fifth with a COVID-19 vaccine. Merck is currently investigating whether its previously approved [Ebola and Measles vaccines](#) can be re-engineered to combat COVID-19.

On Monday, **Pfizer** and its German partner BioNTech, [received fast track designation](#) from the FDA for two of its four vaccine candidates, which will help speed up regulatory approval should one of them prove to be effective during their Phase 1/2 clinical trial, happening now.

And **Johnson & Johnson** recently [selected a leading vaccine candidate](#) and plans to [begin a Phase 1/2a clinical trial](#) in the coming weeks.

With the full innovative capacity of these companies dedicated to identifying an effective coronavirus vaccine, we remain hopeful that we will soon have an immunization to help place us on the return to a new normal in the wake of COVID-19.

–Jonathan Weinberger, Executive Vice President, Global Innovation Policy Center, U.S. Chamber of Commerce