

Fighting the next pandemic with injection-free ‘vaccine patches’

When the next deadly [pandemic flu](#) hits, the first challenge will be to develop a vaccine. But looming behind that obstacle is another: How to get an inoculation to millions of people without inadvertently exacerbating the crisis.

After all, droves of people — some who might already be sickened — who flock to health centers for a shot could be a potent way for the infection to spread.

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A new study provides proof of concept for a solution that could upend the traditional centralized model, in which health professionals give injections at clinics.

Researchers created an H5N1 vaccine, boosted by a special ingredient that primes the body’s immune system to respond. Then, they administered it through a microneedle that only penetrates the upper layer of the skin. They see this prototype technology as a platform that could lead to novel vaccine patches that can be distributed rapidly and administered without a nurse. People would simply have to stick a bandage-like strip, lined with microscopic needles, onto their skin.

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Because public health officials seeking to prepare for a pandemic flu won’t know the exact strain in advance and the virus could change during an outbreak, vaccines that could be made more broadly effective with an adjuvant are exciting to researchers.

Read full, original post: [A prototype of how to fight the next pandemic: A vaccine without the shot](#)