

3 million COVID-19 vaccines a week by June? British American Tobacco in pre-clinical trials on cloning-developed plant-based antigen

British American Tobacco (BAT), which makes Lucky Strike and Benson & Hedges, [says it is developing](#) a vaccine for Covid-19, and that it is currently in in pre-clinical testing. If testing goes well, the company says it could make between 1 and 3 million vaccines a week by June this year if it gets ‘the right partners and support from government agencies’.

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They said they cloned part of the virus’s genetic sequence, which led to the development of a potential antigen. An antigen is a substance which prompts an immune response in the body, and the production of antibodies. The company said this antigen was then inserted into tobacco plants for reproduction and, once the plants were harvested, the antigen was then purified, and is now undergoing pre-clinical testing. They said the vaccine project will be carried out on a not for profit basis.

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