

Skin patch with 400 needles: Another potential coronavirus vaccine ready for human testing

Jonas Salk developed the polio vaccine at a University of Pittsburgh lab. The deadly disease that crippled infants disappeared almost overnight, and Salk became a hero. ...

As the world faces another terrifying disease, Pitt medical scientists are again at work on a potentially revolutionary vaccine. Louis Falo and Andrea Gambotto, respectively a dermatologist and a surgeon, have developed a Covid-19 inoculation that rapidly produces large numbers of coronavirus antibodies when injected in mice. A peer-reviewed paper describing their work appeared in the journal EBioMedicine, which is published by The Lancet. They await approval from the Food and Drug Administration to conduct human trials on their vaccine candidate, which is delivered via a unique skin patch containing 400 tiny needles.

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Thanks to their previous collaborations on vaccine-platform development, the twin teams of Dr. Falo and Dr. Gambotto were able to generate their new potential vaccine, which they call PittCoVax, in a mere seven days. As they wait for the FDA's green light, Dr. Falo says they're tackling two issues. "One is the clinical testing and regulatory process. The other one is the scalability. So can you make a lot of these—millions, billions—to distribute across the world?"

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