

First we need a coronavirus vaccine—Then figure out how to produce 300 million doses

In the midst of national shortages of testing swabs and protective gear, some medical suppliers and health policy experts are looking ahead to another extraordinary demand on manufacturing: Delivering a vaccine that could potentially end the pandemic.

Making a vaccine is not easy. More than two dozen companies have announced programs to develop a [vaccine against the coronavirus](#), but it may still take a year or more before one passes federal safety and efficacy tests in humans and becomes available to the public.

Here in the United States, more than 300 million people may need to be inoculated. That means at least as many vials and syringes — or double that amount, if two shots are required. To meet that demand, companies will have to ramp up manufacturing; products that doctors give little thought to now could easily become obstacles to vaccine delivery in the future.

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“The Covid-19 pandemic is creating industrywide challenges, including expected delays in inventory replenishment for certain products,” said Lucy Bradlow, a spokeswoman for Cardinal Health, which makes vials and syringes as well as other medical supplies.

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