

There will be no vaccine widely available by fall (or anytime soon) even with a miracle breakthrough

Vaccines to prevent Covid-19 infection are hurtling through development at speeds never before seen. But mounting promises that some vaccine may be available for emergency use as early as the autumn are fueling expectations that are simply unrealistic, experts warn.

Even if the stages of vaccine development could be compressed and supplies could be rapidly manufactured and deployed, it could take many more months or longer before most Americans would be able to roll up their sleeves. And in many countries around the world, the wait could be far longer still — perpetuating the worldwide risk the new coronavirus poses for several years to come.

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It's likely any supplies that will be available — if any of the vaccines prove themselves to be protective by the fall — will be designated for health care workers and others on the front line of the response effort.

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Health care workers would likely followed by people at the highest risk — those 65 and older and people with chronic health conditions, like diabetes, that have been seen to increase the risk of dying from Covid-19, [the WHO's Robin] Robinson said.

"I don't think that the general population will have vaccine probably until the second half of 2021. And that's if everything works OK," [WHO virologist Marie-Paule Kieny] said.

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