

Even if a COVID vaccine is approved this winter, most Americans won't get access until mid-2021

While a "very limited supply" of a Covid-19 vaccine might be ready in November or December, it "will have to be prioritized," CDC Director Dr. Robert Redfield told a Senate appropriations subcommittee [September 16].

"It will be those first responders and those at greatest risk for death, and then eventually that will expand," he said.

"If you're asking me when is it going to be generally available to the American public, so we can begin to take advantage of vaccine to get back to our regular life, I think we're probably looking at third, late second quarter, third quarter 2021."

On top of that, "in order to have enough of us immunized so we have immunity, I think it's going to take us six to nine months," he said.

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Dr. Soumya Swaminathan, chief science officer at the World Health Organization in Geneva, said the world might not be able to return to "pre-Covid" life until 2022.

Swaminathan said 60% to 70% of the global population would need to have immunity before there is a dramatic reduction in transmission of the virus.

"We're looking at 2022 at least before enough people start getting the vaccine to build immunity... So for a long time to come, we have to maintain the same kind of measures that are currently being put in place with physical distancing, the masking and respiratory hygiene."

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