

Cancer and HIV vaccines next? mRNA technology behind Moderna and Pfizer COVID shots could lead to vaccines for numerous difficult-to-treat diseases

Following effective clinical trial results and [millions of successful vaccinations](#) with mRNA-based COVID-19 vaccines, researchers now are looking into how the discovery could make way for other coveted treatments.

Scientists at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center are preparing to study [mRNA as a cancer treatment](#) right now.

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In the trial, which is currently in its second phase, doctors test cancer patients who had tumors removed and went through chemotherapy. Once tests reveal cancer cells that are still circulating throughout their bodies, the researchers create individualized mRNA cocktails.

"We're hopeful that with the personalized vaccine, we're priming the immune system to go after the residual tumor cells, clear them out and cure the patient," [said](#) [researcher Van] Morris.

Scientists at Scripps University in California are also looking at HIV, a sexually transmitted infection that affects [1.2 million people worldwide](#), as a candidate for an mRNA vaccine.

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Similar to the way the COVID-19 vaccine attaches to spiky coronavirus proteins and kills them, the HIV vaccine could do the same with HIV particles, [said immunologist [William Schief](#).]

Now that Schief's team knows mRNA can be used to target and kill HIV, they'll use that technology in [future studies in the hopes of soon creating an HIV vaccine](#).

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