

Does more and easier to administer: What will the next generation of COVID vaccines look like?

[R]esearchers are racing to develop the next generation of COVID-19 vaccines, utilizing a variety of innovative technologies to produce more convenient and more potent options. Some of the new vaccines are already being tested in volunteers and could even be available for distribution in the next year or so.

Scientists are exploring one set of changes that should be popular with people who don't like needles.

"We wanted to develop a platform technology where we could easily give a vaccine, and obviously the easiest format to give would be a tablet," says Sean Tucker, chief scientific officer at [Vaxart](#).

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Another vaccine that could be self-administered is a nasal spray vaccine. Frances Lund, chair of the microbiology department at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, is working on that kind of vaccine with the biotech company [Altimune](#). She says that when you give people a vaccine by injection, the protection is systemic — that is, it works throughout the body.

By contrast, an intranasal vaccine induces two kinds of immunity, Lund says. You still get the systemic protection, she says, "but you will also get immunity directly at the site where you put that vaccine."

That makes it harder for the coronavirus to sneak in through the nose.

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