

## Dramatic success of mRNA COVID vaccines opens the door to slew of new cancer treatments

Back when people first heard about Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna's COVID-19 vaccines, the mRNA technology behind them sounded like the stuff of science fiction.

But while the mRNA approach seems revolutionary, long before anyone had heard of COVID-19, researchers had been developing mRNA vaccines to fight cancer, autoimmune diseases such as [multiple sclerosis](#), and to protect against other infectious diseases, such as the [respiratory syncytial virus](#).

"It's not a new idea: What COVID has shown us is that mRNA vaccines can be an efficacious and safe technology for millions of people," says [researcher] Daniel Anderson.

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Currently, phase one and phase two clinical trials are recruiting participants or are underway to assess the efficacy, tolerability, and safety of therapeutic mRNA vaccines to treat various forms of cancer. These include [melanoma](#), [non-small cell lung cancers](#), [gastrointestinal cancer](#), [breast cancer](#), [ovarian cancer](#), and [pancreatic cancer](#), among others.

"One of the beauties of this technology is it can be used in people agnostic to their cancer type—it doesn't matter if it's a breast cancer or lung cancer as long as you can identify its mutations," says [physician] Van Morris.

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