

What are the chances that we'll get a universal flu vaccine?

In truth, we're never fully ready for the flu. [We know it's coming](#), like the first fall leaf, and yet three times in the past century—in 1918, 1957, and 1968—it has flattened us, killing a million or more each time.

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Our primary weapon against the virus, the flu vaccine, is woefully inadequate. Over the last decade and a half in the United States, flu vaccines have prevented illness only forty per cent of the time; in particularly bad years, when vaccines were less fine-tuned to the strains that were circulating, they were only ten-per-cent protective.

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In 2019, scientists at the Vaccine Research Center reported that they'd tested a mosaic flu vaccine on mice; each nanoparticle of the vaccine featured the heads of up to eight different flu strains.

It successfully teed up the production of antibodies capable of neutralizing a range of flu viruses that had appeared between 1918 and 2009.

This year, the same group reported a mosaic vaccine that could also protect people against avian flu variants that are especially dangerous to humans. A version of the vaccine has entered clinical trials.

[**This is an excerpt. Read the original post here.**](#)