

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC



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Coronavirus has 'stable genome,' study suggests, so vaccine could help 'over many years'

By **Chris Ciaccia** | Fox News



COVID-19 is not mutating quickly, new research shows

Dr. Marc Siegel says the latest findings are good news for the development of a vaccine.

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Currently, there is no known specific medicine to treat the novel [coronavirus](#), but researchers in Italy suggest that the [COVID-19](#) disease is slow to mutate, based on its genetic material.

This finding could aid in helping large swaths of people over an extended period of time once a specific cure is found.

The study, which was produced by two independent teams in the country, used "a new next-generation sequencing (NGS) research assay" from Thermo Fisher Scientific on Italian COVID-19 patients. The experts then compared them to a sample from the original outbreak to come up with their findings.

"Had we investigated other viruses we might have expected up to dozens of new mutations after so many infectious cycles in patients," professor Stefano Menzo, head of Virology at Ancona University Hospital, said in a [statement](#). "Our initial data show that this is a very stable RNA virus, with only five novel variants. A virus with a stable genome is good news for vaccine development because it indicates that the effectiveness of vaccines could be more consistent, possibly over many years."

CORONAVIRUS: COMBINATION OF ANTIMALARIAL MEDICATION AND ANTIBIOTICS COULD SHORTEN COVID-19, RESEARCHERS SAY

Dr. Maria Rosaria Capobianchi, head of the Virology Department, Lazzaro Spallanzani National Institute for Infectious Diseases, said the ability to run quick, multiple samples is important in the scientific community's fight to stay ahead of the virus.

However, Capobianchi cautioned, "viral genomes are dynamic and these preliminary data need further analysis to determine the biological significance of the gene variants and to investigate the evolutionary path of the coronavirus."

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The researchers will further analyze the data with Thermo Fisher's new Ion SARS-CoV-2 analysis solution to better understand the virus and analyze the entire genome.

Scientists are looking at a number of different ways to cure the novel coronavirus, which has affected more than 428,000 people around the globe, including at least 55,000 in the U.S.

Researchers in France detailed how a combination of antimalarial medication and antibiotics could be a vital weapon against COVID-19, Fox News previously [reported](#).

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo [announced](#) on Tuesday the state will start coronavirus drug trials, as the hard-hit state recently acquired 70,000 doses of hydroxychloroquine, 10,000 doses of zithromax and 750,000 doses of chloroquine.

On Monday, Cuomo also said the state is [attempting](#) to fight the outbreak by using the blood plasma of recovered patients.

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Fox News' James Rogers contributed to this story.

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