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Flash note
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Treatments and vaccines against Covid. Latest developments

The race for Covid antibody treatment accelerates.

AstraZeneca Plc, in parallel to the development of its vaccine, started late-stage trials for an antibody medicine for the treatment against Covid-19 with a large investment from the U.S. (the U.S. government has awarded $486 million to AstraZeneca Plc to develop and secure supplies of Astrazeneca's treatment). Astra communicated today that two trials for more than 6,000 people are starting to test the antibody treatment. One trial will evaluate the efficacy of the medicine to prevent infection for up to 12 months in about 5,000 participants, while the second trial will evaluate the drug as a pre-emptive medicine once patients have been exposed to the virus. Chief Executive Officer Pascal Soriot said in a statement released on Friday that Astrazeneca's long-acting antibody "has the potential to provide immediate and long-lasting effect in both preventing and treating Covid-19 infections".

Menawhile, other companies such as Eli Lilly & Co. and Regeneron Pharmaceuticals Inc. last week asked the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for emergency-use authorizations. Trump said Regeneron's antibody cocktail was key to his apparent recovery from coronavirus. Early data from both Eli Lilly and Regeneron suggest the medicines are effective in keeping infected people out of the hospital.

On the other hand, GlaxoSmithKline Plc and Vir Biotechnology Inc. also started advanced tests on a possible antibody treatment last week.

Covid Vaccine - Australia moves AstraZeneca's vaccine on first step toward approval. Europe initiates a Rolling Review of preliminary results from early clinical studies.

On 9 October, the Australian Therapeutic Good Administration (TGA) has taken the first step toward provisional approval of the vaccine against COVID-19 being developed by AstraZeneca in collaboration with the University of Oxford.

This first step means that AstraZeneca can now apply for provisional registration in the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods, and provisional approval pathway allows drugs or vaccines to enter the market with just preliminary clinical data, while still allowing for transparency and a formal review process.

In Europe, the European Medicines Agency (EMA) said that initiated the first 'rolling review' of a Covid-19 vaccine developed by AstraZeneca. A rolling review means that the EMA evaluates data as it becomes available from ongoing studies. A real-time review of the Covid-19 vaccine based on preliminary results from early clinical studies. At the moment, the data indicated that the vaccine produces antibodies and T cells against the virus.

What to expect, and when? Results from ongoing large-scale trials should be available over the coming weeks (and months). These findings should offer insights into the vaccine's effectiveness in protecting people against Covid-19.