

Scientists Currently Developing Controversial “Contagious Vaccines” That Can Spread From Vaccinated to Unvaccinated

By Jim Hoft

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Groups of scientists are currently developing ‘self-spreading vaccines’ that could infect others from vaccinated to unvaccinated people or between vaccinated to unvaccinated animals, according to **National Geographic**.

The experiment was designed to spread the vaccine to unvaccinated people in vaccinated person’s close proximity.

“The idea is that instead of a vaccine staying in one person’s body, the vaccine itself would infect them in such a way that they could pass on vaccination to others around them, much as they would otherwise pass on a disease. Scientists could vaccinate one person or animal in a community, and the vaccination would spread to those around them,” per [Newsbreak](#).

According to the report, scientists are currently developing ‘contagious vaccines’ for Ebola, bovine tuberculosis, and Lassa fever, a viral disease spread by rats.

The scientists are also planning to expand their studies to other zoonotic diseases including rabies, West Nile virus, Lyme disease, and the plague.

The vaccines use cytomegalovirus (CMVs), a group that belongs to the herpes family. According to [Mayo Clinic](#), once infected with the virus, your body retains the virus for life.

“[CMV](#) spreads from person to person through body fluids, such as blood, saliva, urine, semen, and breast milk. There is no cure, but there are medications that can help treat the symptoms.”

[National Geographic](#) reported:

Imagine a cure that’s as contagious as the disease it fights—a vaccine that could replicate in a host’s body and spread to others nearby, quickly and easily protecting a whole population from microbial attacks. That’s the goal of several teams around the world who are reviving controversial research to develop self-spreading vaccines.

Researchers are currently developing self-spreading vaccines for Ebola, [bovine tuberculosis](#), and Lassa fever, a viral disease spread by rats that causes upward of [300,000 infections](#) annually in parts of West Africa.

*The approach could be expanded to target other **zoonotic diseases**, including rabies, West Nile virus, Lyme disease, and the plague.*

Advocates for self-spreading vaccines say they could revolutionize public health by disrupting infectious disease spread among animals before a zoonotic spillover could occur—potentially preventing the next pandemic. But others argue that the viruses used in these vaccines could themselves mutate, jump species, or set off a chain reaction with devastating effects across entire ecosystems.

*“Once you set something engineered and self-transmissible out into nature, you don’t know what happens to it and where it will go,” says **Jonas Sandbrink**, a biosecurity researcher at the University of Oxford’s Future of Humanity Institute. “Even if you just start by setting it out into animal populations, part of the genetic elements might find their way back into humans.”*

Vaccines in progress

Renewed interest and funding for the technology popped up around 2016, and today several research groups are developing self-spreading vaccines for animals.

Each of these new vaccines are so-called recombinant viruses. Researchers first identify a protein from the target microbe that serves as an antigen—a substance that triggers immune responses in vaccinated people or animals. Then the researchers select a virus to carry the vaccine and spread it. To do this, researchers capture a few animals from their target population—primates for Ebola, rats for Lassa fever—and isolate a virus that naturally infects those animals. Then they splice in genetic material from the target to create a vaccine.

Each of these vaccines uses a cytomegalovirus, or CMVs, a group that belongs to the herpes family.

*CMVs help the researchers overcome several technical challenges. For one, CMVs have large genomes made from double-stranded DNA, which means their genetic code is more stable and can accommodate additional genes from the targeted microbe, says **Alec Redwood**, a principal research fellow at the University of Western Australia. He conducted self-spreading vaccine **research** in the early 2000s and is now part of a team developing a CMV-based Lassa fever vaccine.*

*So far, no one has conducted any field or laboratory studies assessing the impact and safety of these vaccines delivered via the self-spreading mechanism. However, a recent mathematical modelling **study** reported that if it works as expected, releasing the Lassa fever vaccine could reduce disease transmission among rodents by 95 percent in less than a year.*

Read the full story [here](#).

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Jim Hoft is the founder and editor of The Gateway Pundit, one of the top conservative news outlets in America. Jim was awarded the Reed Irvine Accuracy in Media Award in 2013 and is the proud recipient of the Breitbart Award for Excellence in Online Journalism from the Americans for Prosperity Foundation in May 2016.

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