

# Controversial “Contagious” Vaccines

*National Geographic* has published an article that discusses a renewed effort to develop a highly controversial technology, “contagious/self-spreading vaccines.” This vaccine technology is being reexamined and studied to stop the spread of many zoonotic diseases.



Several teams of researchers from around the world are reviving the controversial research that began in the 1980's. The goal is to produce a contagious vaccine that would replicate in a host's body and then spread efficiently among the close members in a wildlife community. If successful, this vaccine could confer immunity to disease; and can spread from animal to animal or person in the same way diseases do. It could protect entire populations of wildlife or people from a suite of microbial illnesses.

Hopes are that this technology could prevent the next pandemic, as many experts believe happened with COVID -19, by reducing infectious disease transmission among wild animals, essentially stopping pathogens from “jumping” from wildlife/animals to people, however the research is controversial.

Contagious vaccines for Ebola, bovine tuberculosis, and Lassa fever are already underway, being developed by researchers, and it is thought that the technology could be targeted to other zoonotic diseases, including rabies, West Nile virus, the plague, and Lyme disease.

Contagious vaccines may provide a potential solution to the

difficulty and challenges of administering standard vaccines to each individual animal; however, these vaccines involve genetically engineered viruses. Advocates for the vaccines believe that they can potentially prevent the next pandemic, while others are concerned that the viruses used in these vaccines could have unintended consequences such as mutations, species jumping, or other unforeseen widespread impacts on entire ecosystems. To date, there has been only one “proof-of-concept field test.”

**Read full *National Geographic* Article here**

**Read *PubMed.gov* Article on Self-Spreading Vaccine here**

**Read *Technology Networks, Biopharma* Article here**

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