

Opinion | Rapid Development of Vaccines to New Pathogens Is a Process Whose Time Has Come

Opinion / **Published On December 13, 2020 07:32 AM /**

Staff Consortium **December 13, 2020**

Image not found or type unknown



The Pfizer vaccine has been approved for emergency use and it is expected that the Moderna vaccine will soon follow. If you want our lives to get back to some semblance of normal, please plan to take the vaccine when it becomes available. Unless a significant number of us do, the pandemic will continue to plague and take our lives.

Yes, the vaccines were developed in record time, but that is something that needed to happen. Back in 2004, I joined a colleague, Jim Turner, in introducing HR. 4258, The Rapid Pathogen Identification to Delivery of Cures Act. One summary describes its purpose this way:

To promote technological advancements that will dramatically reduce the timeframe for the development of new medical countermeasures to treat or prevent disease caused by infectious

disease agents or toxins that, through natural processes or intentional introduction, may pose a significant risk to public health now or in the future.

Our bill went nowhere, but thankfully, the process to achieve its purpose did, and here we are with these and other vaccines becoming available for a previously unknown virus in less than a year.

FDA, the Advisory Committee in Immunization Practice (ACIP) and the independent reviewers have held firm, ignoring the politics and adhering strictly to science. Further, with England starting to vaccinate this week we will be able to gain more information and hopefully more confidence from their experience.

In the meantime, and for a long time to come, all of us must continue to wear masks or face coverings properly, wash and/or sanitize our hands and surfaces frequently, observe physical distancing and stay away from crowds. I will be taking the vaccine when the phase I am in comes and I urge you to take it too!

Submitted Saturday by former Delegate to Congress Donna M. Christensen

© Viconsortium 2024