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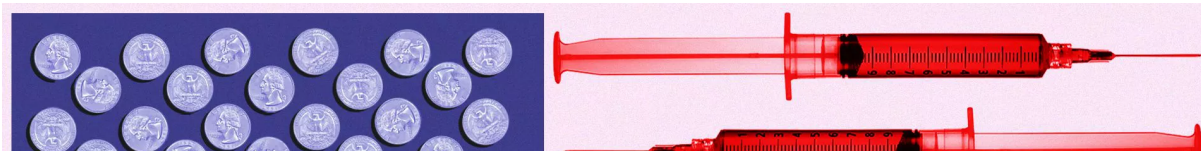
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Jun 25, 2020 - Health

The NIH claims joint ownership of Moderna's coronavirus vaccine



Bob Herman



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Driving the news: New evidence shines light on the extent of NIH's involvement.

- NIH and Moderna have researched coronaviruses, like MERS, for several years, and [signed a contract](#) this past December that stated "mRNA coronavirus vaccine candidates [are] developed and jointly owned" by the two parties. The contract was not specific to the novel coronavirus, and it was signed before the new virus had been [sequenced](#).
- Separately, four NIH scientists have filed for a provisional patent application entitled "2019-nCoV vaccine," according to disclosures in a [pending scientific paper](#). Moderna scientists co-authored that paper, but none are listed as vaccine co-inventors.
- That makes it clear "the government and the public have a stake" in the coronavirus vaccine, said Zain Rizvi, a health law and policy researcher at Public Citizen. "The vaccine would not exist without the intellectual contributions of federal scientists."

What they're saying: NIH said in a [statement](#) that its scientists created the "stabilized coronavirus [spike proteins](#) for the development of vaccines against coronaviruses, including SARS-CoV-2," and the government consequently has "sought patents to preserve the government's rights to

patent rights in order to allow multiple vaccine developers" to make a vaccine.

- NIH added that "federal employees listed as inventors on these patent applications assigned their rights to the U.S. government. Accordingly, should the [United States Patent and Trademark Office] and other national patent authorities grant the patents, the U.S. government will hold ownership interest in the patents."
- Moderna declined to comment beyond a [statement](#), which said the company "has a broad owned and licensed IP estate" and is "not aware of any IP that would prevent us from commercializing our product candidates, including" the coronavirus vaccine.

Between the lines: Rizvi said [co-owning](#) the vaccine could allow NIH to more broadly license the underlying technology to other vaccine manufacturers "without the consent of Moderna," a company that is valued at \$25 billion despite having no federally approved drugs on the market.

The bottom line: Many experts anticipate a coronavirus vaccine, once proven safe and effective, would be made as widely available as possible, and that developers aren't likely to seek big profits from it. Partial federal ownership could be a backstop if those assumptions don't bear out, but NIH isn't keen on stepping on industry's toes.

[vaccine] is a money-maker," Collins said during his Economic Club interview. "I think they want to recoup their costs and maybe make a tiny percentage of increase of profit over that, like single digits percentage-wise, but that's it. Nobody sees this as a way to make billions of dollars."



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Mike Allen, Jonathan Swan
Oct 2, 2020 - Politics & Policy

The president is infected

Photo: Drew Angerer/Getty Images

President Trump, who had talked and acted like he was medically invincible, tweeted just before 1am that he and First Lady Melania Trump [had tested positive for coronavirus](#).

Why it matters: The shocking announcement has personal, political, medical, financial and national security ramifications. Election Day is 32 days away. Markets hate uncertainty, and we now have the biggest X factor in the world.

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Axios
Oct 2, 2020 - Politics & Policy

A file photo shows former President Barack Obama congratulating President Donald Trump after he took the oath of office on the West Front of the U.S. Capitol on January 20, 2017. Photo: Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images

Former President Obama on Friday wished President Trump and Melania Trump a "speedy recovery," [per pool reports](#), after the president and first lady [tested positive](#) for the coronavirus.

What he's saying: "Although we're in the midst of a big political fight, and we take that very seriously, we also want to extend our best wishes" to the Trumps, Obama said.

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Maria Arias

Oct 2, 2020 - Politics & Policy

Chris Wallace to Fox News viewers: "Wear the damn mask"

Chris Wallace directs the first presidential debate. Photo by Olivier Douliery-Pool/Getty Images

Chris Wallace, the Fox News anchor who moderated Tuesday's presidential debate, urged the network's viewers on Friday to "wear the damn mask."

[suggested](#) may have kept millions of Americans from taking the pandemic seriously.

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