


CAPE ARGUS / NEWS

*Globally, more than 35 companies and academic institutions are racing to create a vaccine, at least four of which already have candidates to test on animals. Picture: Yves Herman/Reuters*

## SA part of a charge to develop a vaccine for Covid-19

By Marvin Charles  Apr 8, 2020



Cape Town - With infections of the coronavirus surpassing the 1.3million mark and deaths at 76507 worldwide, the rush to find a cure is increasing, with South Africa playing its part.

Globally, more than 35 companies and academic institutions are racing to create a vaccine, at least four of which already have candidates to test on animals.

Dr Melinda Suchard, head of the Centre for Vaccines and Immunology at the National Institute for Communicable Diseases, said: "There are trials of various existing therapies to see if they can be repurposed for coronavirus.

"They include interferon, lopinavir/ritonavir - which have been used as antivirals against other viruses - and chloroquine, an antimalarial with immune effects.

"South Africa is going to participate in this research, led by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Because these are existing drugs, results should be available rapidly, within the next few months."

Suchard said more specific therapies were likely to be designed and directed against Covid-19 but they would take much longer to develop, manufacture and test.

"Other therapies under investigation include the use of plasma (blood) from healed patients. Monoclonal antibodies (sticky proteins which bind selectively to a target) also hold promise for targeting the virus or the person's immune system.

"Coronavirus vaccines are also in development internationally, with the aim of being able to prevent infection with Covid-19. These vaccines will likely take at least a year or 18 months to be developed and tested," she

said.

On Monday the World Health Organisation (WHO) said the vaccine and treatment research had accelerated at an "incredible speed".

More than 70 countries have joined the WHO's trials to accelerate research on effective treatments and 20 institutions and companies "are racing to develop a vaccine".

In South Africa, confirmed cases stand at 1749 and another death has brought the death toll to 13. In the province there are 490 confirmed cases.

National Health Department spokesperson Popo Maja said: "Our scientists are part of the global movement to find a vaccine. We don't know how long it will take. The most important thing for us is to

save lives.

“What needs to happen for the time being is personal hygiene and physical distance should be a feature of our behaviour in public spaces.”

Director of Research at UWC, Professor Burtram Fielding, said: “Typically the development of antivirals, drugs or vaccines is a very costly, long process. Even if we’re rushing these through the various development stages, we need to ensure that it all passes rigorous testing for safety and efficacy.

“Best estimates indicate we could have a vaccine by the middle of 2021. Should the current antiviral and drugs (used for other diseases) prove effective in treating Covid-19 in clinical trials, it could be much sooner.”

*\* For the latest on the Covid-19 outbreak, visit IOL's [special #Coronavirus page](#).*

*\*\* If you think you have been exposed to the Covid-19 virus, please call the 24-hour hotline on 0800 029 999 or visit [sacoronavirus.co.za](http://sacoronavirus.co.za)*

@MarvinCharles17

marvin.charles@iol.co.za

## Cape Argus

SHARE THIS ARTICLE:



Search IOL

FOLLOW IOL   

Advertisement

## RELATED ARTICLES

---

Is the answer in plain sight? Global demand soars for any drug that might beat Covid-19

---

SA being part of Covid-19 vaccine trial is an 'exciting development'

---

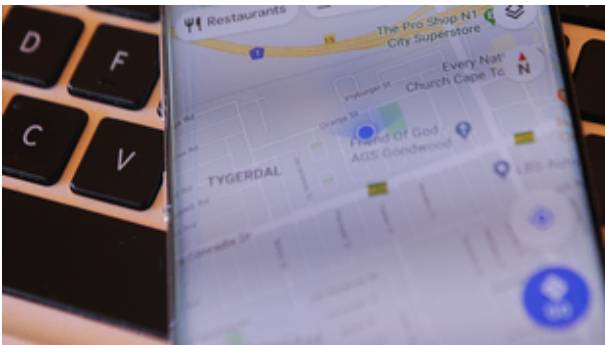
SA's Covid-19 positive cases now stand at 24 264 with 43 deaths reported in the last 24 hours

## TRENDING ON IOL

#ULTIMATESA    #USELECTIONS2020    #CORONAVIRUS

Advertisement

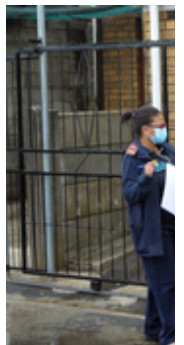
### Related Articles



Database to track possible Covid-19 carriers sparks privacy concerns



Covid-19: Western Cape 'would welcome help from Cuban doctors or anywhere'



490 Covid-19 cases in Western Cape

### RECOMMENDED STORIES

RECOMMENDED BY |



SIU clamps down on corruption at Eskom,



Getting a Job in UK may be easier than you think



Cape Town: How to get an income by investing

wants to recoup R8.7b...

Jobs in UK | Sponsored Listing

\$250 in Netflix or other...

smartinvest.com



Cape Town: How to get an income by investing \$250 in Amazon or...

marketingiant.com



Not so Mr Malema, John Block is still behind bars – Correctional Services



How to get a second income by investing \$250 in Amazon and...

Investingops

Most Read

Editors Choice

Longwe Twala shot Senzo Meyiwa during an argument with Zandi Khumalo, claims family

Hawks arrest Shepherd Bushiri and his wife

Prophet Bushiri and wife expected to appear in court on Wednesday

1050 new Covid-19 cases takes SA's caseload to 706 304 with 164 new deaths reported

PICS: Cape cops find R5m stolen jewellery stash and cash in raids at Stikland, Bellville storage facilities

SECTIONS ON IOL

News Tech Business Report Entertainment Lifestyle Sport Motoring Travel  
Personal Finance Multimedia

FOLLOW IOL



**MORE ON IOL**

[About IOL](#) [Contact Us](#) [Weather](#) [IOL Mobile App FAQ](#) [Advertise with us](#) [Feedback](#)  
[Complaints Procedure](#)

**LEGAL**

[Press Code](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Terms & Conditions](#)

**TRENDING ON IOL**

[#ultimatesa](#) [#USElections2020](#) [#CoronaVirus](#)

[NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBE](#)

**NEWSPAPERS**

[The Star](#) [Cape Argus](#) [Weekend Argus](#) [Daily News](#) [Cape Times](#) [The Mercury](#)  
[Pretoria News](#) [Saturday Star](#) [The Independent on Saturday](#) [Sunday Tribune](#)  
[Sunday Independent](#) [The Post](#) [Daily Voice](#) [Isolezwe](#)

© 2020 Independent Online and affiliated companies. All rights reserved

Please visit the official Government information portal for Coronavirus by clicking [HERE](#)