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NIAID, Moderna Had COVID Vaccine Candidate in December 2019

Analysis by Dr. Joseph Mercola ✔ Fact Checked

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- Moderna, together with the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), sent mRNA coronavirus vaccine candidates to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill on December 12, 2019 — raising significant red flags
- The providers agreed to transfer "mRNA coronavirus vaccine candidates developed and jointly-owned by NIAID and Moderna" to the university's investigator and was signed by Ralph Baric
- Baric pioneered techniques for genetically manipulating coronaviruses, which became a major focus for research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV)
- Baric worked closely with WIV's Shi Zhengli, Ph.D., on research using genetic engineering to create a "new bat SARS-like virus ... that can jump directly from its bat hosts to humans"
- Serious questions need to be answered, including: Were Moderna, NIAID and Baric aware that COVID-19 was circulating in mid-December 2019, or did they have knowledge far before that such a vaccine would soon be in demand?

So much has happened over the past year that it may be hard to remember what life was like pre-COVID. But let's flash back to December 2019, when the idea of social distancing, compulsory masking and lockdowns would have been met with disbelief and outrage by most Americans.

At that time, most were blissfully unaware of the pandemic that would change the world in the next few months. It wasn't until December 31, 2019, that the COVID-19 outbreak was first reported from Wuhan, China,[1] and at this point it was only referred to as cases of viral pneumonia, not a novel coronavirus.[2] I say "most" because it seems some people may have been aware of something lurking much earlier than it appeared.

In confidential documents[3] revealed by the U.K.'s Daily Expose, Moderna, together with the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), sent mRNA coronavirus vaccine candidates to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill December 12, 2019 — raising significant red flags. As The Daily Expose reported:[4]

> *"What did Moderna [and NIAID] know that we didn't? In 2019 there was not any singular coronavirus posing a threat to humanity which would warrant a vaccine, and evidence suggests there hasn't been a singular coronavirus posing a threat to humanity throughout 2020 and 2021 either."*

COVID-19 Vaccine Candidate Was Released Prior to Pandemic

The confidential disclosure agreement relays a material transfer agreement between the providers — Moderna, NIAID and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) — and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The providers agreed to transfer "mRNA coronavirus vaccine candidates developed and jointly-owned by NIAID and Moderna" to the university's investigator.[5]

> *"The material transfer agreement was signed the December 12th 2019 by Ralph Baric, PhD, at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and then signed by Jacqueline Quay, Director of Licensing and Innovation Support at the University of North Carolina on December 16th 2019,"* Daily Expose noted.

At this point, some backstory information is more than relevant. We know with great certainty that researchers at China's Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) had access to and were doing **gain-of-function research** on coronaviruses, and manipulating them to become more infectious and to more easily infect humans. We also know that they

collaborated with scientists in the U.S. and received funding from the National Institutes of Health for such research.

Baric, who signed the material transfer agreement to investigate the mRNA coronavirus vaccine candidate before there was a known COVID-19 pandemic, pioneered techniques for genetically manipulating coronaviruses, according to Peter Gøtzsche with the Institute for Scientific Freedom,[6] and these became a major focus for WIV.

Baric worked closely with Shi Zhengli, Ph.D., the director of WIV's Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases, also known as "bat woman," on research using genetic engineering to create a "new bat SARS-like virus ... that can jump directly from its bat hosts to humans." According to Gøtzsche:[7]

> *"Their work focused on enhancing the ability of bat viruses to attack humans so as to 'examine the emergence potential.' In 2015, they created a novel virus by taking the backbone of the SARS virus replacing its spike protein with one from another bat virus known as SHC014-CoV. This manufactured virus was able to infect a lab culture of cells from the human airways.*
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> *They wrote that scientific review panels might deem their research too risky to pursue but argued that it had the potential to prepare for and mitigate future outbreaks. However, the value of gain-of-function studies in preventing the COVID-19 pandemic was negative, as this research highly likely created the pandemic."*

Moderna Gets Emergency Use Approval for COVID Vaccines

The rest of the story, as the saying goes, is history. December 12, 2019, Amy Petrick, Ph.D., NIAID's technology transfer specialist, signed the agreement, along with Dr. Barney Graham, an investigator for NIAID, whose signature is undated.[8] May 12, 2020, just months later, Moderna was granted a fast-track designation for its mRNA-1273 vaccine by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. According to Moderna's news release:[9]

> *"mRNA-1273 is an mRNA vaccine against SARS-CoV-2 encoding for a prefusion stabilized form of the Spike (S) protein, which was selected by Moderna in collaboration with investigators from Vaccine Research Center (VRC) at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), a part of the NIH."*

December 18, 2020 — about one year after the material transfer agreement was signed — the FDA issued emergency use authorization for Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine for use in individuals 18 years of age and older.[10] June 10, 2021, Moderna also filed for emergency use authorization for its **COVID-19 shot** to be used in U.S. adolescents aged 12 to 17 years.[11] Yet, we still have no answers to some glaring questions:[12]

> *"It was not until January 9th 2020 that the WHO reported[13] Chinese authorities had determined the outbreak was due to a novel coronavirus which later became known as SARS-CoV-2 with the alleged resultant disease dubbed COVID-19. So why was an mRNA coronavirus vaccine candidate developed by Moderna being transferred to the University of North Carolina on December 12th 2019?*
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> *… Perhaps Moderna and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases would like to explain themselves in a court of law?"*

SARS-CoV-2 Appears To Be Uniquely Able to Infect Humans

Nikolai Petrovsky, professor of endocrinology at Flinders University College of Medicine in Adelaide, Australia, is among those who has stated SARS-CoV-2 appears to be optimally designed to infect humans.[14]

His team sought to identify a way by which animals might have comingled to give rise to SARS-CoV-2, but concluded that it could not be a naturally occurring virus. Petrovsky has previously stated it appears far more likely that the virus was **created in a laboratory** without the use of genetic engineering, by growing it in different kinds of animal cells.[15]

To adapt the virus to humans, it would have been grown in cells that have the human ACE2 receptor. Over time, the virus would then adapt and eventually gain the ability to

bind to the human receptor. U.S. Right to Know (USRTK) pointed out that the issue of binding sites is an important one, as the distinctive binding sites of the **SARS-CoV-2 spike protein** "confer 'near-optimal' binding and entry of the virus into human cells."[16]

Scientists have argued that SARS-CoV-2's unique binding sites may be the result of either natural spillover in the wild or deliberate recombination of an unidentified viral ancestor. Baric and others, including Peter Daszak, EcoHealth Alliance president, to which he is closely tied, were quick to **dismiss the lab-leak hypothesis**, which suggests that SARS-CoV-2 accidently leaked from a laboratory in Wuhan, China. Yet, according to Gøtzsche:[17]

> *"On 9 December 2019, just before the outbreak of the pandemic, Daszak gave an interview in which he talked in glowing terms of how his researchers at the Wuhan Institute had created over 100 new SARS- related coronaviruses, some of which could get into human cells and could cause untreatable SARS disease in humanized mice … "*

Daszak's EcoHealth Alliance funded controversial GOF research at WIV; NIAID gave funding to the EcoHealth Alliance, which then funneled it to WIV.[18] Daszak, despite working closely with WIV, was part of the **World Health Organization's investigative team** charged with identifying the **origin of SARS-CoV-2**. Not surprisingly, the team dismissed the lab-accident theory.

Baric's SARS-Like Virus Wasn't Made Public Until May 2020

Regarding the novel SARS-like virus that Shi and Baric created in 2015, this research was conducted using a grant from EcoHealth Alliance.

While the information relating to the virus' DNA and RNA sequences was supposed to have been submitted to a national biotechnology information database when the research was published, this wasn't done until years later, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. As reported by *Alexis Baden-Mayer, political director for the Organic Consumers Association*:[19]

> *"The work, 'A SARS-like cluster of circulating bat coronaviruses shows potential for human emergence,'[20] published in Nature in 2015 during the NIH's moratorium[21] on gain-of-function research, was grandfathered in because it was initiated before the moratorium … and because the request by Shi and Baric to continue their research during the moratorium was approved by the NIH.*
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> *As a condition of publication, Nature, like most scientific journals, requires[22] authors to submit new DNA and RNA sequences to GenBank, the U.S. National Center for Biotechnology Information Database. Yet the new SARS-like virus Shi and Baric created wasn't deposited[23] in GenBank until May 2020."*

Meanwhile, both Baric[24] and Daszak were involved in organizing the publication of a scientific statement, published in The Lancet and signed by 26 additional scientists, condemning inquiries into the lab-leak hypothesis as "conspiracy theory."[25]

Daszak was also made a commissioner of the Lancet Commission on COVID-19, but now that his extreme conflict of interest has been made public, he was recused from the commission.[26]

Baric, Daszak Downplay Lab-Leak Theory

At the time The Lancet statement was released in February 2020, Daszak had advised Baric against adding his signature because he wanted to "put it out in a way that doesn't link it back to our collaboration so we maximize an independent voice."[27] The authors also declared no competing interests.

In an update published June 21, 2021, The Lancet stated, "Some readers have questioned the validity of this disclosure, particularly as it relates to one of the authors, Peter Daszak."[28] The journal invited the authors to "re-evaluate their competing interests," and Daszak suddenly had much more to say. His updated disclosure statement reads, in part:[29]

> *"EcoHealth Alliance's work in China includes collaboration with a range of universities and governmental health and environmental science organizations,*

all of which are listed in prior publications, three of which received funding from US federal agencies as part of EcoHealth Alliance grants or cooperative agreements, as publicly reported by NIH.

… EcoHealth Alliance's work in China involves assessing the risk of viral spillover across the wildlife–livestock–human interface, and includes behavioral and serological surveys of people, and ecological and virological analyses of animals.

This work includes the identification of viral sequences in bat samples, and has resulted in the isolation of three bat SARS-related coronaviruses that are now used as reagents to test therapeutics and vaccines.

It also includes the production of a small number of recombinant bat coronaviruses to analyze cell entry and other characteristics of bat coronaviruses for which only the genetic sequences are available."

Also of note, a special review board, the Potential Pandemic Pathogens Control and Oversight (P3CO) committee, was created within the Department of Health and Human Services to evaluate whether grants involving dangerous pathogens are worth the risks.

Baden-Mayer explained, "This committee was set up as a condition for lifting the 2014-2017 moratorium on gain-of-function research. The P3CO committee operates in secret. Not even a membership list has been released."[30]

Daszak stated in his updated disclosure, "NIH reviewed the planned recombinant virus work and deemed it does not meet the criteria that would warrant further specific review by its Potential Pandemic Pathogen Care and Oversight (P3CO) committee."[31]

However, according to Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright, an NIH grant for research involving the modification of **bat coronaviruses at the WIV** was sneaked through because the NIAID didn't flag it for review.[32] In other words, the WIV received federal funding from the NIAID without the research first receiving a green-light from the HHS review board.

The NIAID apparently used a convenient loophole in the review framework. As it turns out, it's the funding agency's responsibility to flag potential GOF research for review. If it doesn't, the review board has no knowledge of it. According to Ebright, the NIAID and NIH have "systemically thwarted — indeed systematically nullified — the HHS P3CO Framework by declining to flag and forward proposals for review."[33]

Who Knew What, and When?

We now have proof that Moderna and NIAID sent their mRNA coronavirus vaccine candidates to Baric at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in mid-December 2019. Were they aware that COVID-19 was circulating at that time, or did they have knowledge far before that such a vaccine would soon be in demand? The red flags, and **cover-ups**, continue to mount, but ultimately the **truth will prevail**.

Sources and References

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