Fox News Geraldo Rivera Suggests Naming COVID Vaccine After Trump: 'Would Be a Nice Gesture'

Brendan Cole

Fox News contributor Geraldo Rivera has praised the role that President Donald Trump has played in facilitating the creation of a vaccine for the coronavirus and has jokingly suggested that the medication should be named after him.

Getty Images Geraldo Rivera at SiriusXM Studios on November 1, 2018 in New York City. The Fox News contributor has suggested naming the coronavirus vaccine after President Donald Trump.

In a segment on Fox and Friends on Friday morning, Rivera described Trump as the "prime architect" of Operation Warp Speed, the U.S. government program which funded the vaccine development.

"But for him we would still be waiting into the grim winter for these amazing miraculous medical breakthroughs," he said.

Pfizer has said it was only involved in Operation Warp Speed as a supplier and received no government funding to develop the drug. However the U.S. government has pledged $2bn in orders for 100 million doses which would cover the company's spend on its development.

> *To soften the blow of defeat Fox's Geraldo proposes naming the vaccine after Trump. "It would be a nice gesture to him and years from now it would become kind of a generic name. Have you got your trump*

yet, I got my trump, I'm fine. I wished we could honor him in that way." pic.twitter.com/fM8qwFhxF6

Early results from Pfizer's Phase 3 clinical trials appear to have shown its vaccine, which uses innovative mRNA technology, was 95 percent effective in preventing symptomatic Covid-19.

Rivera said: "I had an idea. With the world so divided and everybody telling him (Trump) he's got to give up and (it's) time to leave and (it's) time to transition and all the rest of it, why not name the vaccine, the Trump?"

He then speculated about scenarios in which people could start asking "you know have you got your Trump yet? It would be a nice gesture to him and years from now it would become kind of a generic name."

"Have you got your Trump yet? I got my Trump, I'm fine. You know, I wish we could honor him in that way," Rivera added, to chuckles from the Fox anchors.

However there is concern that officials from Trump's vaccine distribution effort have not briefed the transition team of President-elect Joe Biden.

Senator Chris Murphy tweeted: "They confirmed that they have not briefed anyone on President-elect Biden's team and have no plans to do so. This is potentially catastrophic."

Meanwhile on Friday, Pfizer and BioNTech will apply to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for approval for its vaccine which it aims to roll out to Americans who need it most by next month.

It comes amid a sweep of positive news for a vaccine against the disease that has claimed more than 1.3 million lives globally and over a quarter of a million Americans.

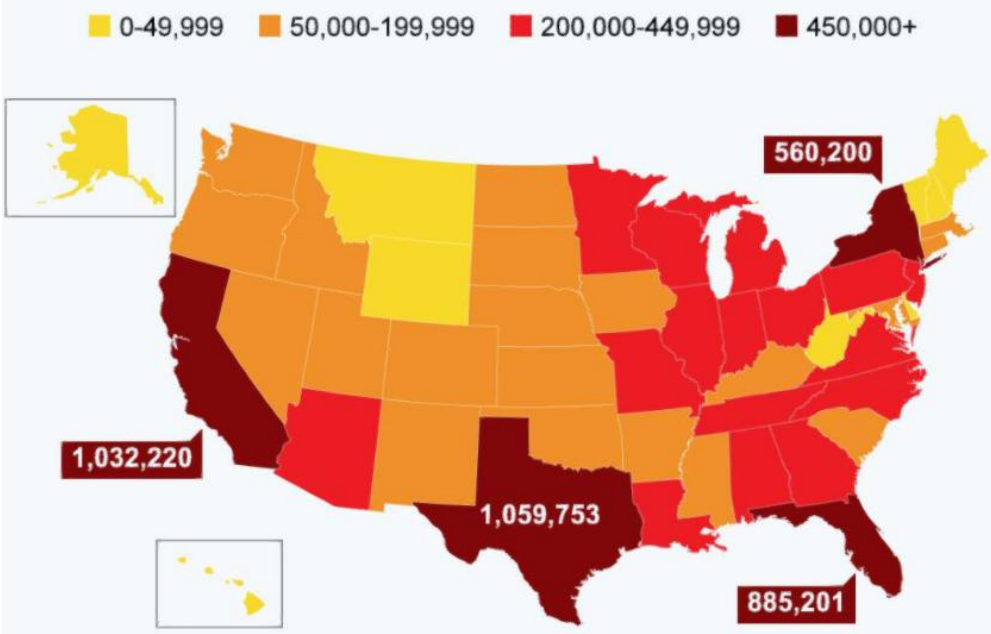
Pfizer upgraded its assessment of the vaccine's efficacy from 90 percent to 95 percent, while on Monday, biotechnology firm Moderna said phase 3 trials suggested its vaccine was 94.5 percent effective.

On Thursday, an Oxford University study reported how its COVID vaccine was safe and triggered an immune response in older people who are more susceptible to the disease.

The graphic below from Statista shows how the coronavirus cases has spread across the U.S.

Confirmed COVID-19 Cases in the U.S.

Number of confirmed COVID-19 cases, by U.S. state*



* as of November 16 at 1:30 AM EDT

Source: Johns Hopkins University

HEALTH

Pfizer to Apply for Emergency Use of COVID Vaccine, High-Risk Populations May Get Shot Before Christmas

Kashma Gander

Pfizer and BioNTech will apply to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration on Friday to roll out its vaccine against COVID-19, hoping that it will be available to high-risk individuals in the U.S. in December.

The American pharmaceutical and German biotechnology companies said in a press release on Friday that they will submit a request to the FDA for what is known as an emergency use authorization for their vaccine named BNT162b2. This is the first such application to the FDA for a COVID vaccine.

If given the green light, the vaccine could be distributed "within hours" and made available to populations at high risk of health complications from COVID-19 by the middle to end of December, 2020, the news release said. That means it may be in people's arms before Christmas.

A source close to the situation told Reuters an FDA advisory committee may meet to discuss the vaccine between December 8 to 10, however the dates are subject to change.

The companies plan to submit applications to other regulatory agencies around the world "immediately." They forecast 50 million doses will be available globally in 2020, and 1.3 billion by the end of next year. But that is dependent on a number of factors, including whether bodies authorize its use, as well as manufacturing capabilities, the news release said.

The announcement comes in a fortnight of positive vaccine news amid a pandemic that has killed over 1.3 million people globally. On Monday, November 9, Pfizer claimed its vaccine was 90 percent on, later updating the figure to 95 percent.

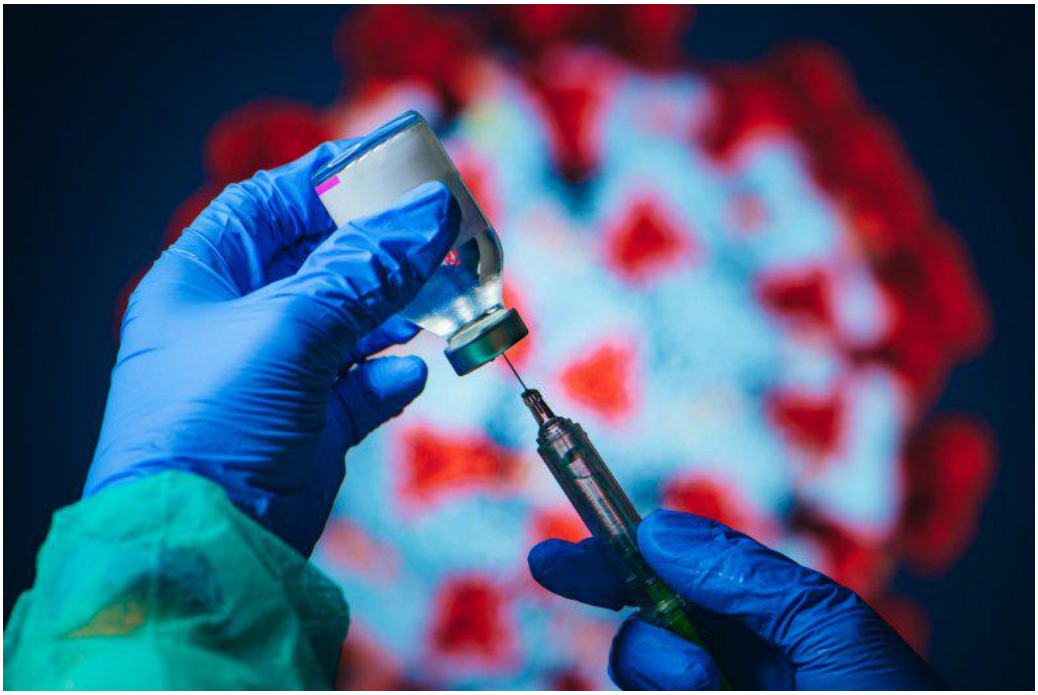
A week later on Monday, November 16, biotechnology firm Moderna reported phase 3 trials suggest its vaccine was 94.5 percent effective.

And on Thursday, a scientists at Oxford University published a study indicating their COVID vaccine was safe and triggered an immune response in older people—a population at serious risk of COVID. Neither Pfizer nor Moderna have published their phase 3 trial results data in peer-reviewed journals, prompting experts not involved in the research to urge caution.

Both Pfizer and Moderna's vaccines contain genetic material known as mRNA. This approach has not yet been used in commercially available vaccines for humans.

Dr. Ugur Sahin, CEO and co-founder of BioNTech, said in a statement: "Filing for Emergency Use Authorization in the U.S. is a critical step in making our vaccine candidate available to the global population as quickly as possible.

This is a developing story and will be updated as more information becomes available.



A stock image shows a vaccination being prepared against a background of an illustration of the coronavirus. Pfizer is due to apply to the FDA for an EUA.GETTY