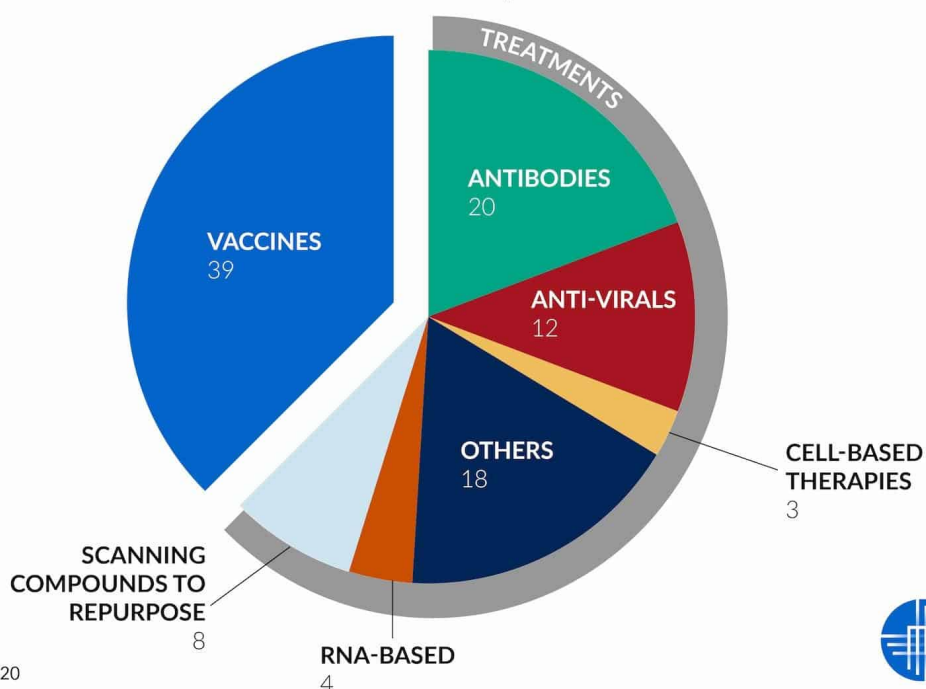


# InvestorIntel's Weekly Update on the Public Companies in the Race to Treat and Prevent COVID-19

COVID-19 ("coronavirus") is causing global chaos. As of March 30, 2020, there are **722,196 confirmed cases and 33,976 deaths** worldwide, with new cases globally increasing at around 60,000 per day. InvestorIntel takes a look at the companies that are racing to develop effective treatments and vaccines, and hence be the likely winners from COVID-19 crisis.

The chart below shows some of the sub-categories of the various ways to treat or prevent coronavirus. In this article, I will briefly look at some of the key companies working on the treatment areas. In future articles, I will look at the vaccine companies as well as following who may be the eventual winning companies. I may even look at some companies that focus to produce immune-boosting vitamins and natural medicines that can be useful to prevent people from catching the coronavirus.

## Potential COVID-19 Treatments and Vaccines in Research Pipeline



Updated March 23, 2020

Source

### Antibodies

By using patients that have recovered from coronavirus the aim is to use antibodies from their blood plasma to treat active coronavirus patients. Antibodies are the body's natural way to fight off pathogens such as viruses. Some key companies include:

- CSL Ltd. ("Commonwealth Serum Laboratories") ("CSL") (ASX: CSL | OTC: CSLLY) – CSL is Australia's largest listed company and a global biotech leader. CSL's core business is the development and large-scale manufacture of plasma-based therapies, recombinant proteins and influenza vaccines. CSL is currently working with WHO and others to source recovered COVID-19 patients "as possible donors of their antibodies."
- Roche Holding Ltd. (SW: ROG | OTCQX: RHHBY) – Swiss pharmaceutical giant Roche will begin coronavirus clinical studies in April 2020.

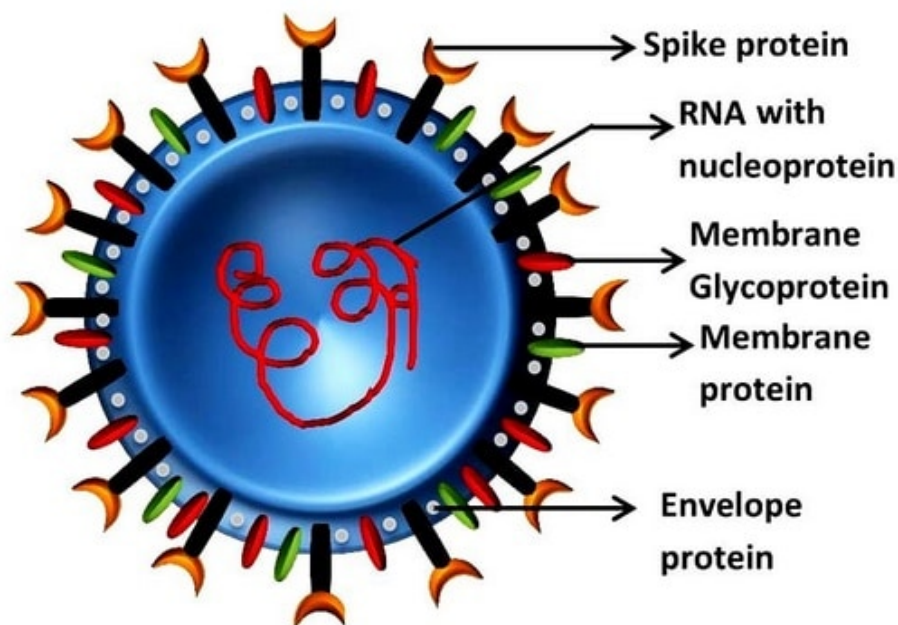
- Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited (NYSE: TAK | TSE:4502) – Takeda is a Japanese drug maker with a focus on drugs for cancer, GI tract, and CNS diseases. They are targeting treating coronavirus patients in September 2020 for pre-clinical trials.

Other global companies working on this approach include Regeneron Pharmaceuticals Inc. (NASDAQ: REGN), Sanofi Pasteur (NASDAQ: SNY | EURONEXT: SAN), Celltrion, Inc. (KS: 068270), CytoDyn Inc. (OTCQB: CYDY), Kamada Ltd. (NASDAQ: KMDA), AstraZeneca PLC (NYSE: AZN | OTC: AZNCF), and others.

## Anti-Virals

Anti-virals generally work by blocking the virus's ability to replicate thereby inhibiting its spread within the body.

### The makeup of a typical virus



For now the anti-viral medicine getting the most attention is the anti-malaria agent Chloroquine, especially after President Trump tweeted about the merits of Chloroquine ('hydroxychloroquine') and Azithromycin taken together for coronavirus. With SARS Chloroquine was effective as it disrupts the virus's ability to replicate. Some recent studies

in France & China suggest it is effective while others disagree. Chloroquine overdose can be a problem due to its high toxicity. Chloroquine has been around a long time and is therefore manufactured by many companies. Some include Sanofi Pasteur (NASDAQ: SNY | Euronext: SAN), Novartis AG (NYSE: NVS | SW:NOVN), Bayer AG (GR: BAYN | OTC: BAYRY), and Mylan N.V. (NASDAQ: MYL), as well as many others.

On March 22 President Trump tweeted:

*“HYDROXYCHLOROQUINE & AZITHROMYCIN, taken together, have a real chance to be one of the biggest game changers in the history of medicine. The FDA has moved mountains – Thank You! Hopefully they will BOTH (H works better with A, International Journal of Antimicrobial Agents).”*

Some key anti-viral companies include:

- Gilead Sciences Inc. (NASDAQ: GILD) – Gilead’s Phase 3 coronavirus clinical trial results on its anti-viral Remdesivir are expected in April 2020. Gilead also has other HIV medicines that may prove to be effective.
- BioCryst Pharmaceuticals Inc. (NASDAQ: BCRX) – BioCryst’s Galidesivir is an anti-viral used for yellow fever. It is currently undergoing trials to treat coronavirus.
- Fujifilm Toyama Chemical/Zhejiang Hisun Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. (SHA: 600267) – Their Japanese licenced influenza drug Favilavir is being trialled in China. It has reportedly shown efficacy in treating the disease with minimal side effects in a clinical trial involving 70 patients.

Some others include AbbVie Inc. (NYSE: ABBV), Ascleptis Pharma Inc. (HK:1672 | OTC: ASCLF), Pharmstandard PJSC (RU: PHST), Roche, Cocystal Pharma Inc. (NASDAQ: COCP), and others.

**Cell-based therapies and others**

The cell based therapies include using placenta cells, mesenchymal stem cells, or bone marrow stem cells. Companies in this area include Mesoblast Limited (NASDAQ: MESO), Athersys Inc. (NASDAQ: ATHX), and AlloVir.

Anti-RNA virus drugs are used to help stop the coronavirus replicating. Some companies involved include Sirnaomics, Vir Biotechnology Inc. (NASDAQ: VIR), and AIM ImmunoTech Inc. (NYSE: AIM).

Most of the major drug companies such as Pfizer Inc. (NYSE: PFE), Merck & Co., Inc. (NYSE: MRK), Novartis and so on, are currently scanning their existing drugs to see if any can be repurposed for coronavirus.

**Scientists globally are racing to find a cure for COVID-19 (coronavirus)**



## Reference

A comprehensive list and details on over one hundred companies

working on COVID-19 can be found here. It is published by the Milken Institute with linked references.

### **Closing remarks**

The race is on to treat and prevent coronavirus. The simplest methods will probably prove to be the best, such as using recovered patients COVID-19 antibodies, or antiviral and RNA blocker medications. Longer term vaccines can also play a vital role.

Rest assured, hundreds, if not thousands of global companies are racing to find a coronavirus cure. Given the human race prevailed previously against all sorts of viral pandemics, I am sure we will soon prevail again.

As to which company will be the winner that is the million-dollar question. For now, I would be following those that can have real mass market treatments available within a few months, not years. The big established pharmaceutical companies will surely also play a role and investors can buy the sector using various funds such as iShares S&P 500 Global Healthcare ETF (IXJ).

InvestorIntel will continue to follow the sector and publish articles on those companies that are the front runners at solving the coronavirus pandemic.