

Pfizer admits it 'engineered' new Covid mutations

An executive with the drug firm previously said that the company was creating more potent strains of the virus in a laboratory



FILE PHOTO: Research assistants watch sequencing machines analyzing the genetic material of Covid-19 cases at the Wellcome Sanger Institute in Cambridgeshire, England, January 7, 2022 © AP / Frank Augstein

US drugmaker Pfizer admitted on Friday that it “*engineered*” treatment-resistant variants of Covid-19 in order to test its antiviral medicine. The admission partially backs up earlier claims by an executive with the company who told an undercover reporter that Pfizer was deliberately “*mutating*” the virus to “*preemptively develop new vaccines.*”

In a [statement](#) posted on its website, Pfizer said that it “*has not conducted gain of function or directed evolution research,*” referring to the practice of amplifying a virus’ ability to infect humans and the process of selecting ‘desirable’ traits of a virus to reproduce, respectively.

However, the pharma giant said that it combined the spike proteins of new coronavirus variants with the original strain in order to test its vaccines, and that it created mutations of the virus to test Paxlovid, its antiviral drug.

“*In a limited number of cases...such virus may be engineered to enable the assessment of antiviral activity in cells,*” the company said, adding that this work was carried out in a secure laboratory. The work also sought to create “*resistant strains of the virus,*” it added, describing a process commonly understood as being ‘gain of function’ research.

Pfizer's statement came two days after Jordon Trishton Walker, an executive involved in the firm's mRNA division, told an undercover reporter that the company was "exploring" ways to "mutate [Covid] ourselves so we could create, preemptively develop, new vaccines." Walker said that scientists were considering infecting monkeys with the virus, who would then "keep infecting each other."

"From what I've heard, they [Pfizer scientists] are optimizing it, but they're going slow because everyone is very cautious," he explained. "Obviously they don't want to accelerate it too much. I think they are also just trying to do it as an exploratory thing because you obviously don't want to advertise that you are figuring out future mutations."

Pfizer's statement makes no mention of the supposed plan to

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infect monkeys, instead explaining that any work on live viruses is carried out in vitro, meaning inside test tubes or other lab equipment.

Walker was told on camera that he was speaking to a journalist with Project Veritas, a conservative outlet known for its hidden-camera sting operations. After hearing this, Walker insisted that he was lying to impress his date, before [attempting](#) to steal an iPad from Project Veritas CEO James O'Keefe.