

Mexico signs deals for coronavirus vaccine trials

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Mexico said Tuesday it had signed deals with three pharmaceutical companies from the United States and China to carry out clinical trials of potential coronavirus vaccines in the hard-hit country.

The Latin American nation, which has the world's third-highest

COVID-19 death toll, said that Janssen Pharmaceuticals, part of Johnson & Johnson, CanSino Biologics and Walvax Biotechnology, would begin Phase 3 trials from September.

They will join French company Sanofi, which is also carrying out final stage trials of a potential coronavirus vaccine in the country of more than 128 million.

After infection rates fell in Europe thanks to lockdown measures, [drug companies](#) turned to hard-hit countries including Mexico, Brazil and South Africa to carry out large-scale vaccine trials on volunteers.

The government wants to ensure that "Mexico has timely access" to a coronavirus vaccine when it is ready, Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard told a news conference.

He said Mexico was in direct contact with 15 of the laboratories most advanced in the field.

The country has reported 53,000 deaths from the virus—behind only the United States and Brazil—although the government points out that, adjusted for population size, it is not as badly hit.

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