Pfizer says Covid-19 pills cut hospital, death risk by 90%

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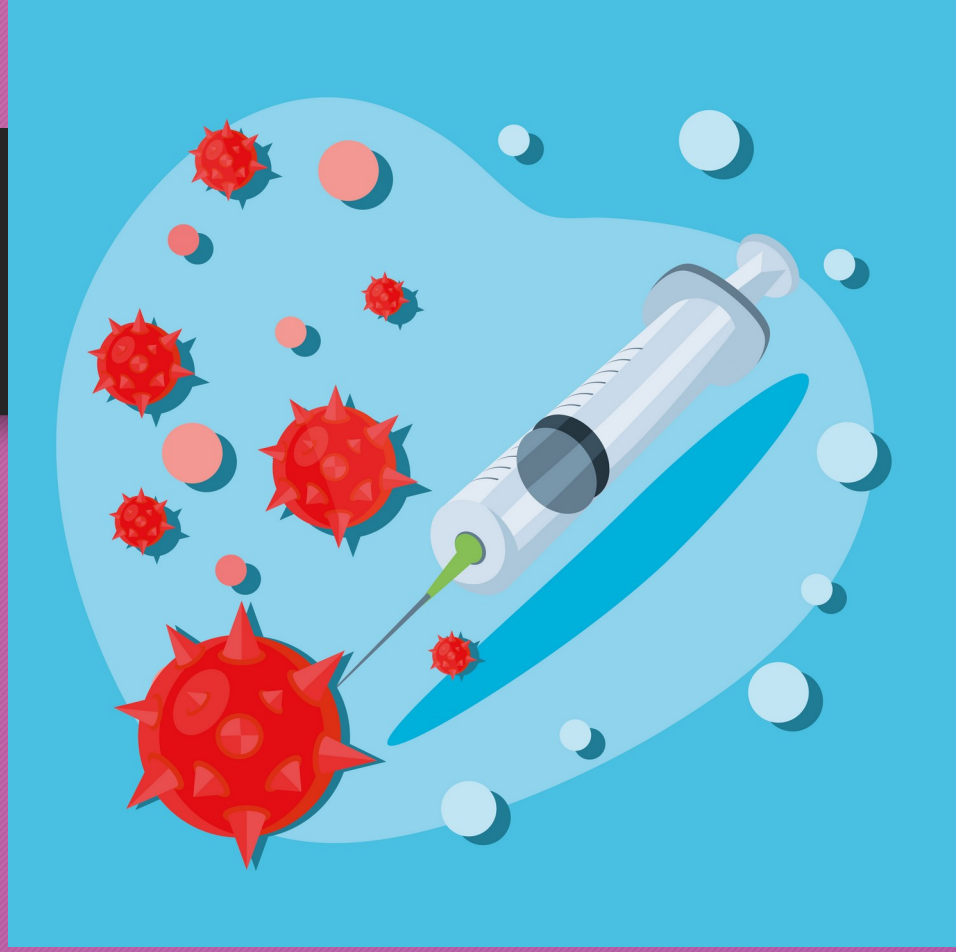
Pfizer Inc. said Friday that its experimental antiviral pill for COVID-19 cut rates of hospitalization and death by nearly 90% in high-risk adults, as the drug maker joined the race for an easy-to-use medication to treat the coronavirus.

- Currently most COVID-19 treatments require an IV or injection. Competitor Merck's COVID-19 pill is already under review at the Food and Drug Administration after showing strong initial results, and on Thursday the United Kingdom became the first country to OK it.
- Pfizer said it will ask the FDA and international regulators to authorize its pill as soon as possible, after independent experts recommended halting the company's study based on the strength of its results. Once Pfizer applies, the FDA could make a decision within weeks.
- The FDA has set a public meeting later this month to review Merck's pill, known as molnupiravir.

Having pills to treat early COVID-19 “would be a very important advance,” said Dr. John Mellors, chief of infectious diseases at the University of Pittsburgh, who was not involved in the Pfizer study.

“If someone developed symptoms and tested positive we could call in a prescription to the local pharmacy as we do for many, many infectious diseases,” he said.
The FDA has set a public meeting later this month to review Merck’s pill, known as molnupiravir.
The company reported in September that its drug cut rates of hospitalization and death by 50%.
Experts warned against comparing preliminary results because of differences in the studies, including where they were conducted and what types of variants were circulating.



“It’s too early to say who won the hundred meter dash,” Mellors said. “There’s a big difference between 50% and 90% but we need to make sure the populations were comparable.”

Although Merck’s pill is further along in the U.S. regulatory process, Pfizer’s drug could benefit from a safety profile that is more familiar to regulators with fewer red flags. While pregnant women were excluded from the Merck trial due to a potential risk of birth defects, Pfizer’s drug did not have any similar restrictions. The Merck drug works by interfering with the coronavirus’ genetic code, a novel approach to disrupting the virus.

- The U.S. has approved one other antiviral drug for COVID-19, Remdesivir, and authorized three antibody therapies that help the immune system fight the virus. But they have to be given by IV or injection at hospitals or clinics, and limited supplies were strained by the last surge of the delta variant.
- Imagine that we can have covid-19 treatment orally at home ! . What Breaking News!

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