



BRIEF

US to launch large-scale universal flu shot testing in 2016

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Dive Brief:

- After news that this year's flu vaccine is only 23% effective, researchers have ratcheted up development efforts of a universal flu vaccine to ensure protection against all strains of the flu—for years at a time.
- There are currently many challenges that make it difficult to ensure broad effectiveness each year, including a long manufacturing process which involves growing the virus in eggs or cell lines and requires that health officials predict the virus strains eight months ahead of active flu season.
- Although human early-stage testing of the universal vaccine has started, large-scale testing will start in 2016, according to Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

Dive Insight:

The goal of a universal flu vaccine is to protect vaccinated individuals from all strains of the flu for decades to come. Though this seems like a lofty goal, researchers at some of the most esteemed research facilities have been working on this goal, including researchers at McMaster's University and the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City, and the French biotech start-up, [Calixar](#).

In October 2014, BioPharma Dive discussed the appeal of a universal vaccine with Barry Mennen, MD, a Washington-D.C.-based physician. According to Dr. Mennen: "The great hope is that a universal influenza vaccine is proven safe and effective. Here, antibodies would be generated to proteins that remain unchanged from strain to strain and year to year. The FDA has completed the evaluation in animals of one such product and will move on to the next stage of testing. This would be a brilliant advance."

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[Flu Shot May Be Upended as U.S. Tests Universal Vaccine](#) 



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