

Drs. Bloom and Seley-Radtke in Duluth News Tribune: 'Vaccines are close, but we'll still need antiviral drugs'



By Josh Bloom — November 18, 2020

We got some very good news in the past week. Vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna greatly exceeded expectations. But Drs. Seley-Radtke and Bloom argue in the Duluth News Tribune that antiviral drugs will still be needed, no matter how good the vaccines are.



Artwork: Duluth News Tribune [1]

Although the clinical trials are not complete and there are still many questions to be answered, it is difficult not to be optimistic about Pfizer's new COVID-19 vaccine.

If there was a single physician or scientist who predicted a 90% protection rate, he or she did an amazing job of keeping it secret. If the vaccine's unexpected preliminary results hold up, we will have the possibility of making a serious dent in this terrible pandemic, which has thrown the world into chaos in less than one year.

Vaccines have been remarkably successful at eradicating deadly diseases such as smallpox, polio, and diphtheria. Other vaccines, especially for influenza, are far from perfect. Flu vaccines must be given annually and have a protection rate of only about 50%. This is due to resistance and new strains of flu arising every year, rendering the previous year's vaccine ineffective. This is already occurring with COVID-19 as numerous strains of the virus that causes it have already

been identified.

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