

FluGen reporting positive results from vaccine study

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FluGen is reporting positive results from a “human challenge” study, in which participants were purposefully exposed to a flu virus to test vaccine efficacy.

FluGen, based in Madison, is undertaking the study with the support of a \$15.4 million Department of Defense grant. Published recently in the Journal of Infectious Diseases, the study results show that participants who received the vaccine candidate were less likely to be infected by the target influenza strain.

“Current vaccines are strain-specific and in recent years they have had low efficacy against H3N2 influenza, especially when the vaccine is mismatched to circulating virus,” said Dr. Robert Belshe, a professor of infectious diseases and immunology at Saint Louis University and chair of the company’s advisory board.

In a release, he noted the vaccine candidate used in the study was effective against an influenza strain that had accumulated genetic variations through mutation. This process, known as antigenic drift, results in viruses such as the flu changing over time.

Belshe noted that “subjects with vaccine-induced neutralizing antibodies were protected against infection and illness following challenge with an antigenically drifted virus.”

The study included adults between the ages of 18 and 55 who received an

intranasal spray of either the vaccine or a placebo. They were then exposed to the specific influenza strain four weeks later. Researchers found that 54 percent of subjects who received the vaccine candidate were infected, compared to 71 percent of those who got the placebo.

See more on the study

results: <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/flugen-announces-publication-of-positive-results-from-phase-2-human-challenge-study-of-its-m2sr-vaccine-candidate-against-highly-drifted-strain-of-h3n2-influenza-virus-301344726.html>

-By Alex Moe