German companies at the heart of coronavirus vaccine efforts

Berlin (GTAI) - German companies CureVac and BioNTech were both in the headlines this week as companies working overtime to develop a vaccine to prevent the spread of coronavirus. That’s no accident, say health experts.

"Like all modern medicines, vaccines are high-tech products," says Germany Trade & Invest (GTAI) Director of Chemicals and Health Marcus Schmidt. "To research and develop them, you need the latest analysis and synthesis technology, genetic laboratories, high-performance computers, analytic robots and a lot of other things. Equally important are highly qualified pharmaceutical scientists, an effective research landscape and efficient regulatory authorities. As Europe’s leading pharmaceutical location, Germany offers a particularly good environment. No other country spends as much money on pharmaceutical R&D."

Earlier in the week Germany’s BioNTech announced it is teaming up with American pharmaceutical giant Pfizer to attempt to develop a messenger-RNA-based COVID-13 vaccine. This sort of collaboration is typical.

"Because of the great complexity of the subject, international cooperation is common within the pharmaceutical sector," says Schmidt. "So, too, is collaboration between large pharmaceutical companies and innovative biotech firms."

It can take years, Schmidt cautions, for vaccines to be fully developed and approved. But he also sees reason for cautious optimism with the coronavirus.

"It took around four years to get vaccines against Ebola and avian flu approved," Schmidt says. "However, the process could be significantly faster with COVID-19 because companies aren’t starting from scratch. Antipathogens that could help in the fight against the disease already exist and now need to be clinically tested. There are reasons to think that the first vaccines might be available this year. But before they can be prescribed generally, they will have to be approved by an internationally recognized regulatory authority."

Contact Us

Jefferson Chase
Media Relations USA

+49 30 200 099 170

Submit your question

All rights reserved. Any reproduction in whole or part only with express written permission. All efforts are made to ensure integrity of the content, however we are not liable for any mistakes that may occur.