



Past Pandemics & What Came Of Them - Health Overview

Over the decades, pandemics have evolved and lasted for varying periods of time, yet always culminating with the containment and/or elimination of a virus. Should history repeat itself, a vaccine will eventually emerge to combat the COVID-19 virus, thus alleviating the threat of further immediate contamination.

Even though scientists have not identified how to stop a virus outbreak before it starts, advancements in medical technology over the past 17 years have drastically reduced the time it takes to develop and implement a vaccine after a new virus emerges.

The current coronavirus outbreak has been preceded by two similar outbreaks since 2003, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). SARs originated out of China in 2002, spread worldwide and was contained within a few months. The World Health Organization (WHO) tracks deaths related to pandemics globally. The organization found that the SARs virus resulted in 774 deaths in 17 countries. MERs, also known as the camel flu, resulted in 862 deaths.

Joint efforts among international governments and nonprofit research entities have allowed extended research on emerging infectious diseases worldwide. Several groups and scientists from various countries are already underway trying to develop a vaccine for COVID-19.

Sources: The National Center for Biotechnology Information, WHO