

THERE'S A SHOT IN SIGHT

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Developing a vaccine that is to be endorsed by doctors and medical institutions nationwide, typically requires upwards of five years. But in order to keep up with changing times, medical research companies all over the world have spent the last ten months accelerating the vaccine design and testing process.

Currently, 54 vaccines are being tested on humans and 87 vaccines are in preclinical research on animals.

There are currently three different types of vaccines being developed: Genetic vaccines, Viral vector vaccines, and Protein-based vaccines. A wide variety of formulas are being developed by companies such as Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson, in an attempt to find the

formula most compliant with the human immune system

With the rapid development of vaccines, American citizens are showing distrust towards a vaccine. In a recent Gallup poll, it was recorded that, "Fifty-eight percent of Americans in the latest poll say they would get a COVID-19 vaccine, up from a low of 50% in September." This leaves 32% of Americans without protection from inoculation. The building distrust of the government among the American public has only increased in recent times, with the pandemic affecting our daily lives and creating an economic crisis nationwide.

People are scared, and any sense of stability has diminished. Still 30%-40% of the American population plan to remain unvaccinated, which is down from the initial estimated 80% of people that said they would receive the

vaccine back in May.

But companies continue to develop vaccines for the American public. The most promising vaccine currently is being developed and formulated by Pfizer and Biotech labs. Pfizer Inc. said Wednesday, November 18th, 2020, it will ask health regulators to authorize its experimental Covid-19 vaccine within days, after reporting the shot was 95% effective in its pivotal study and showing signs of immunity for all recipients.

This recent scientific development is thought to be the biggest step in the last year towards eradicating or gaining control over Covid-19. It is undeniable that there will be fear towards something with far less testing than usually required, but it could also be the quickest solution to return to what life once was.



The Power of Neuroplasticity

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Neuroplasticity is the brain's ability to update and remold the pathways of which neurons are arranged. Neuro as in the nervous system and plasticity as in the characteristic of being easily shaped. Neuron arrangements can diminish or generate based on the experiences the brain and body undergo. According to Positive Psychology, Jerry Konorski, a neuroscientist from the 1940s, first coined the term "Neuroplasticity" after discovering neuron structure can be rearranged and transformed. It was once believed that human beings were born with a specific quantity of neurons and throughout the

progression of their life, the brain cells would slowly perish. Yet, it has been proven that neurons can indeed be created in a process known as neurogenesis and can then adapt and shift behavioral responses through neuroplasticity.

Neuroplasticity allows a person to have access to the ability in rewiring their brain. The brain is arguably the most essential and powerful organ of the organ system as it encompasses the nervous system. It carries out the functions necessary to experience sensations from the five senses of our bodies. Sensory stimuli trigger sensory neurons to transmit a message to the brain telling it the body is experiencing some form of interaction with the outside world that requires a reaction in response. Initially,

one might think that there are some responses that the brain enacts that are simply inevitable to stop, for example feeling pain after touching a hot surface. Yet, neuroplasticity is so powerful that one can theoretically train their brain into not feeling pain when touching a hot surface.

The medical field has begun to apply the study of neuroplasticity into the concept of healing diverse medical cases. According to FPA Support in one medical case, a woman named Jenny LeCompte was suffering from type-one Trigeminal Neuralgia and Bell's Palsy and managed to drastically improve her symptoms with neuroplastic therapy. LeCompte had developed a speech impediment, vertigo, and an inability to properly walk. She had tried a multitude of

treatments and therapies in hopes of healing the severity of her conditions, yet she experienced no positive results. In her last attempts, LeCompte began neuroplastic treatment. After 12-18 months of treatment, LeCompte no longer has a speech impediment and can walk properly without the use of a cane.

Neuroplasticity can also be credited to the concept of manifestation and the law of attraction. Manifestation is the notion that one's personal desires and wishes can become reality through thoughts, feelings, emotions, and actions that are directed towards that desire. This works hand in hand with the notion of the law of attraction, which is the belief that what one allows their minds to focus on, one will eventually obtain. Both

concepts put into practice the ability to manipulate the brain through repetition of thoughts as a way to obtain a set goal or action, essentially neuroplasticity. Science has proven that one can control their future through the practice of visualization. The success of manifestation has been proven on many accounts. In a story by Fox Sports, UFC fighter Conor McGregor is an example of an athlete who prospered in his field after admitting that through the years he had begun by stating his goals and establishing a sense of belief in himself. He managed to even predict that he would win two world champion belts.

In short, neuroplasticity is a drastic discovery in the science world. One has the ability to control the structure of their mind



Hurricane Iota, a Storm for the History Books

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Forming on November 13th in the Caribbean and reaching its peak on November 15th, Hurricane Iota became the biggest hurricane of the year, and the overall 2020 hurricane season was more active than it had been in years. The storm has since been downgraded to a tropical storm, however, the damage inflicted on Central America will still be catastrophic, especially seen as the area is still recovering from Hurricane Eta, which struck only 15 miles north on November 3rd.

Hurricane Iota will strike the Yucatan Peninsula, all the way

south to Columbia, and as far east as Jamaica. Iota made landfall on Nicaragua as a category 4 hurricane. After reaching the coast, it has weakened significantly, but still poses significant threats of flooding, landslides, and extremely dangerous winds blowing as fast as 155 miles per hour.

Hurricane Iota became the strongest storm to strike the Columbian Islands in recorded history, hitting the islands of San Andres and Providencia. Having never experienced such a powerful storm since records began, both islands were grossly underprepared for the damage that would be caused by the winds, rain, mudslides, and

flooding. At least one person died on the island of Providencia, and about 90% of the island's infrastructure has been affected. Additionally, the local airport became unusable due to debris, trapping most people on the island.

In Honduras, where the hurricane has recently struck as it passed over central America, thousands have been left homeless, and at least 40 people have been killed due to the flooding and mudslides that ripped apart buildings and rendered most roads completely unusable.

The 2020 Atlantic hurricane season has been the most ac-

tive in recorded history, with 30 named storms so far. Never before has the season lasted this long in the year, a statistic that, when combined with the coronavirus pandemic, will certainly have effects on the area for years to come. Researchers and meteorologists began predicting this historic year of storms as early as December 2019. This increase in hurricanes could be due to a multitude of reasons, such as more moisture in the air moving off the African coast and certain atmospheric wind patterns that help the storms grow. According to secasc.ncsu.edu, "Research suggests that global climate change is also playing a role."

A recent study concluded that ocean temperatures since 2005 are higher than any other period in the past 2,900 years". Currently, The National Hurricane Center is currently tracking not only Hurricane Iota, but another potential, unnamed tropical depression that could grow later in the week. As of now, there are currently many non-profit disaster relief foundations, such as World Central Kitchen, Red Cross, Mercy Corps, and many more that are working in these areas to help the victims of these ongoing catastrophes.



Massive Jewel Heist

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On November 25, 2019, a massive heist took place inside the German state of Saxony city's Green Vault Museum. This is one of the world's oldest museums and contains countless priceless treasures. The thieves stole 18th-century jewels from a unique collection in Dresden. These jewels have an estimated value of at least one billion euros. The extremely high value of these items makes this one of the largest thefts in history.

Throughout the year, police began connecting pieces of the theft. In March, they determined the car used by the thieves and connected it back to an automotive seller in Germany. Authorities believed that the car was painted before the theft, making it reasonable that this theft was planned well in advance.

Authorities offered a massive reward of 500,000 euros for anyone who had valuable information regarding the recovery of the stolen jewelry or the identity and arrest of the thieves. Over 1,500

police in Berlin carried out multiple searches leading to the arrest of three people connected to the theft of the jewels. Although the jewels are yet to be recovered, this arrest is a huge step forward in finding them and returning them to the museum.

Police assume there were six individuals directly involved in this heist and are working to find the remaining criminals. They have put out pictures of two individuals Mohammed and Abdul Remmo, suspecting them to be part of this robbery. Members of the Remmo extended family were charged this year for the theft of the Canadian gold coin, the "Big Maple Leaf".

This coin is 220 pounds, worth 3.75 million euros, and was stolen from Berlin's Bode Museum in 2017. This coin is yet to be recovered and assumed to have been put into smaller pieces and sold. Andreas Geisel, Berlin's top security officer, stated that these raids should be a warning to the organized crime families.



Art by Tenley Tomlinson