

Omicron update: GSK drug works against all mutations

British drugmaker GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) has announced its antibody-based Covid-19 therapy with US partner Vir Biotechnology is effective against all mutations of the new Omicron coronavirus variant, citing new data from early-stage studies.



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The data, yet to be published in a peer-reviewed medical journal, shows that the companies' treatment, sotrovimab, is effective against all 37 identified mutations to date in the spike protein, GSK said in a statement.

Last week, other pre-clinical data showed that the drug had worked against key mutations of the Omicron variant. Sotrovimab is designed to latch on to the spike protein on the surface of the coronavirus, but Omicron has been found to have an unusually high number of mutations of that protein.

"These pre-clinical data demonstrate the potential for our monoclonal antibody to be effective against the latest variant, Omicron, plus all other variants of concern defined to date by the WHO," GSK chief scientific officer Hal Barron said.

GSK and Vir have been engineering so-called pseudoviruses that feature major coronavirus mutations across all suspicious variants that have emerged so far, and have run lab tests on their vulnerability to sotrovimab treatment.

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