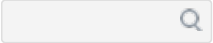


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Gottlieb says vaccine will likely be widely available by middle of 2021

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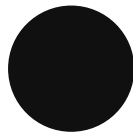
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Gottlieb: Vaccine should be widely available ...

07:04

Former Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb said the COVID-10 vaccine will likely be widely available to the general public by the



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Gottlieb, appearing on "Face the Nation," said elderly residents in nursing homes will likely be the first group to get vaccinated once a vaccine is approved. After that, elderly people living at home could be the next group vaccinated, with lower age groups and populations with less risk being eligible to receive it by "probably second quarter of 2021, maybe third quarter, if things go well."

"We'll be able to vaccinate the public or a good portion of the public heading into the fall of 2021," Gottlieb said. "I think 2021 is going to be a much different year with COVID, with the combination of the vaccine and other therapeutics, the therapeutic antibodies that will be in wider supply in 2021. What we really need to get through is the next two or three months."

→ **Transcript: Scott Gottlieb on "Face the Nation"**

Gottlieb also said the U.S. doesn't likely need 70% of the population to receive the vaccine to achieve herd immunity, estimating that up to 30% of the U.S. population might have contracted COVID-19 by the end of the winter, and thus have some level of immunity.

"What you need to do is get some percentage of the people who haven't already had the infection vaccinated and ideally some of the people who have had the infection to basically double down on their immunity," he said.

The former FDA commissioner said "we don't know yet" if the COVID-19 vaccine will need to be given annually, like the flu shot, but predicted it would be as a precaution.

"My guess is it's going to be an annual vaccination for a period of time until we know more," Gottlieb said.

Like **Dr. Anthony Fauci**, Gottlieb urged caution in the hard winter months ahead. Nobody wants to be that person who contracts COVID-19 in the next few months when a vaccine is just around the corner, he said.

"There is light at the end of the tunnel right now," Gottlieb said. "We just need to get through a very difficult period right now."

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Kathryn Watson

Kathryn Watson is a politics reporter for CBS News Digital based in Washington, D.C.

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