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Ron Bauer Explains How the Biotech Industry Plays a Crucial Role in Containing COVID-19

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In a 2015 TED Talk, Bill Gates warned us about a COVID-19-like pandemic and knew we weren't prepared for it. One of the primary industries working overtime during this global pandemic to slow the spread of COVID-19 is biotechnology. Playing a crucial role in containing COVID-19 through active testing, treatment, and vaccine development, Ron Bauer is taking a look at the role that these companies play in the fight against the novel Coronavirus. As someone who has been investing in Life Sciences for over a decade, Ron Bauer knows how important biotechnology is during a pandemic. To outline their role and how they're stepping up to the plate, we spoke to [Ron Bauer who has worked with some of the world's leading scientists](#) to develop successful early-stage Life Science companies.

Understanding Biotechnology

Broadly, biotechnology (biotech) is technology based on biology. Ron Bauer describes biotechnology as being any technological application that uses biological systems, living organisms, or derivatives thereof to make or modify products or processes for a specific use. Biotech helps to heal the world by harnessing nature's own toolbox, using our own genetic makeup to heal and create guidelines for research by reducing rates of infectious disease, changing the odds of life-threatening conditions, tailoring treatments to minimize health risks, create precise tools for disease detection, and combat serious illnesses. Ron Bauer explains that other than the countless essential workers and healthcare staff, biotech companies are our frontline defense against COVID-19.

At present, biotech companies are working very closely with U.S. government agencies, Chinese authorities, and the World Health Organization to identify their most pressing needs in the areas of vaccination, diagnostics, antivirals, and other treatments. Ron Bauer explains that the best way to illustrate exactly how this is being done is through the various examples on the frontline.

A Toronto-based company, Structura Biotechnology, which develops machine learning algorithms and scientific software for biology research and drug discovery, is playing a key role in a critical breakthrough in the search for a vaccine for COVID-19. Ron Bauer explains that researchers at the University of Texas at Austin and the United States National Institutes of Health are relying on the company's cryoSPARC platform, which allows scientists to obtain high-resolution pictures of proteins by shooting electrons at frozen samples. Because of this platform, researchers claim they have created the first 3D, atomic-scale map of the Coronavirus spike protein, which is the part that attaches to and infects human cells. Ron Bauer explains that this is a critical first step in creating a treatment and vaccine for the virus.

What Is Biotech's Role in Testing for COVID-19?

Happiness Biotech Group Limited announced on March 25th that together with Fuzhou University, they have achieved a breakthrough in developing COVID-19 testing kits. Currently, Ron Bauer explains that the main COVID-19 testing method is through nucleic acid detection, which takes an average of 5 to 6 hours to detect. Happiness Biotech Group made a breakthrough and successfully developed a colloidal gold testing kit which not only improves the success rate of detection, but only takes 10 to 15 minutes. This improvement in testing has allowed healthcare professionals to act quickly in directing their patients and providing appropriate, fast-acting care.

Biotech companies are working harder than ever to come up with effective treatments for the COVID-19 novel Coronavirus. Several high profile companies and several small biotech companies are working on new experimental vaccines. While making and testing new vaccines may not wind up being the fastest way to treat COVID-19, companies are also looking at repurposing other drugs in the meantime. From testing to treatment and vaccines, Ron Bauer explains that it is apparent how crucial biotechnology companies are in the fight against COVID-19, returning us all to normal as fast as they can.

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