

Vaccines with Professor Jonathan Van-Tam video transcript

[Text: Vaccines with Professor Jonathan Van-Tam]

[Text: How are Covid vaccines being developed?]

The normal time frame to make a vaccine is certainly five to ten years and the reason for that is you do one small experiment and then you wait and you get the results and then you do the next one, then you do the next one, then you do the next one.

At each stage, because these are commercial products made by companies, there has to be an investment decision about whether to move to the next stage, and then the next stage after that and this whole process can go into months and months and then years and years.

But with COVID vaccines it is clear that we have a global public health emergency on our hands and that even waiting five years for a COVID vaccine if we don't have to, is completely the wrong thing to do.

So what's happened is that the shackles have come off in terms of investing. Governments such as the UK government have put hundreds of millions of pounds into this, deliberately, on purpose to try and speed it up. But, is it true that somehow the threshold for safety or the threshold for effectiveness are different for COVID-19 vaccines? Absolutely not. Those rules don't change a bit.

They are in the hands of the professional regulatory authorities who are totally independent. In our country the UK, it's the MHRA the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency.

They work independently and they make the decisions on what is safe and what is effective in relation to the threat that we are facing.

[Text: Department of Social Care & Health]