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## Merriam-Webster gives "vaccine" a new definition

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Prefatory note: In this post, I take the noun "vaccine" as the basic word under discussion, but also consider other cognate terms ("vaccinate", "vaccination").

Here's a standard dictionary entry for "vaccine":

n.

1. any preparation of weakened or killed bacteria or viruses introduced into the body to prevent a disease by stimulating antibodies against it.
2. the virus of cowpox, used in vaccination, obtained from pox vesicles of a cow or person.
3. a software program that helps to protect against computer viruses.

[1800–05; < New Latin (*variolae*)*vaccīnae* cowpox = *vacc(a)* cow + *-īnae*, feminine pl. of *-īnus* -ine]

Random House Kernerman Webster's College Dictionary

([cited](#))

Let us compare that with [the new M-W entry for "vaccine"](#):

: a preparation that is administered (as by injection) to stimulate the body's [immune response](#) against a specific infectious disease:

a : an antigenic preparation of a typically inactivated or attenuated (see [attenuated sense 2](#)) pathogenic agent (such as a bacterium or virus) or one of its components or products (such as a protein or toxin)

b : a preparation of genetic material (such as a strand of synthesized [messenger RNA](#)) that is used by the cells of the body to produce an antigenic substance (such as a fragment of virus [spike protein](#))

### Examples of *vaccine* in a Sentence

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//At the time, J&J had been committed to delivering 24 million doses of its *vaccine* to the U.S. by the end of April.

— [Melissa Holzberg, \*Forbes\*, "FDA Issues Scathing Report Of Baltimore Warehouse Where Johnson & Johnson Vaccines Were Ruined," 21 Apr. 2021](#)