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Japan-funded study explores antibodies to neutralise omicron

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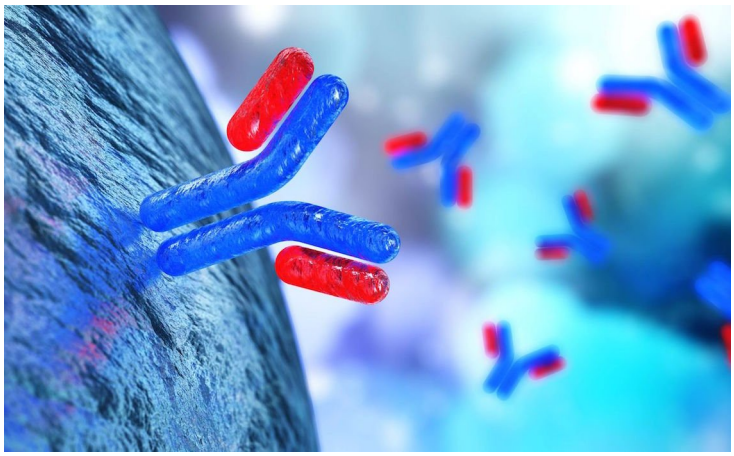
Antibodies are able to neutralise via recognition of conserved areas in many different variants of the virus



An international team of scientists have identified antibodies that neutralize omicron and other SARS-CoV-2 variants. These antibodies target areas of the virus spike protein that remain essentially unchanged as the viruses mutate.

By identifying the targets of these “broadly neutralizing” antibodies on the spike protein, it might be possible to design vaccines and antibody treatments that will be effective against not only the omicron variant but other variants that may emerge in the future.

“This finding tells us that by focusing on antibodies that target these highly conserved sites on the spike protein, there is a way to overcome the virus’ continual evolution,” the researchers said.

Funded by the Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and many more, the study revealed that antibodies from people who had been infected by earlier strains and from those who had received one of the six most-used vaccines currently available, all had reduced ability to block infection.