



Jonas Salk was a doctor and scientist who invented a vaccine for the disease poliomyelitis, better known as polio. Salk was born in New York, NY in 1914. Even in high school, young Jonas was a serious student and an avid reader. He attended New York University for medical school. During post-graduate study, he began research on influenza, the virus that causes flu. Thus began his interest in virology, the study of viruses.

Salk took a job running his own virology lab at the University of Pittsburgh. There, he continued his work on the influenza virus. He was asked to begin polio research by an organization called the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, and he accepted. He spent years researching and developing an experimental polio vaccine, and in 1955, it was finally ready for human testing. The vaccine trial was one of the largest that had ever taken place. 220,000 volunteers signed up to receive the experimental vaccine.

The tests were successful, and the vaccine was seen to be very effective. Overnight, Salk became a nationally known figure. He decided not to patent his vaccine, so others could make use of it without having to pay him to use his formula. He did not want to profit from his invention, he only wanted to help as many people around the world as possible. Today, all countries that use Salk's vaccine have almost completely eliminated polio infection.

In 1963, Salk founded the Jonas Salk Institute for Biological Studies, which still operates as a medical and scientific research facility today. In addition to research, Salk wrote several books, some co-authored with some of his sons, who had also become scientists. Salk continued his work and his research all the way through the last years of his life.

1. In what year was Salk's polio vaccine tested on human subjects? _____
2. Who co-authored some of Salk's books? _____
3. What is the name for the study of viruses? _____