

Cuba launches first nanopharmaceutical

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Cuba has unveiled its first manufactured nanopharmaceutical drug—a tweaked variety of cyclosporine, used to help prevent transplant rejection—official media reported Saturday.

"Its main advantages are that it can achieve the same favorable effect with a dose three times less powerful, using the most prescribed drug of its kind in its class, and while significantly reducing side effects," lead researcher Dario Lopez told the Communist Party newspaper Granma.

His research included design of the drug, also used to treat arthritis, "in a totally water soluble form, in which [cyclosporine](#) appears dissolved in the form of [nanoparticles](#) in microcapsules."

Nanotechnology is a field of applied science in which materials on a tiny scale—structures with at least one dimension sized from 1 to 100 nanometers—are manipulated for industrial, medical and other purposes.

Cuba has a biotech research industry focused largely on vaccines, which earns the Americas' only Communist-run country about \$400 million a year.

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