

Jonas salk



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Jonas Salk was born on October 20, 1914 in New York City to Russian-Jewish immigrants. As the first member of his family to attend college, he developed a fascination with the flu virus and sought a way to eliminate its ability to infect people with influenza. After accepting an appointment in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, he began working with the National Foundation for Infantile paralysis and there began work on polio, the cure for which Jonas Salk would be known forever. In 1950, children throughout the United States were stricken with polio, or poliomyelitis.

Those children who did not die from the disease were left crippled. In some cases, adults contracted polio as well. One of the most famous examples was president Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who was left in a wheelchair after a bout with the disease. Salk created a polio vaccine from a dead polio virus, which lost the ability to infect once it was killed. It did, however, retain the ability to immunize any who were injected with the “dead” form of the virus. Later, other work was performed in order to create a “live” vaccine that could be given orally (Salk’s vaccine had to be injected).

The administration of this “live” vaccine failed, and Salk’s was used from that point on. Salk could have patented the vaccine and become a rich man; rather, he refused to do so in order to get the vaccine out to those who needed it quickly. Jonas Salk’s polio vaccine has completely eliminated the disease – provided the vaccine is given. After his success with polio, Salk created the Jonas Salk Institute for Biological Studies and not only continued his research, but wrote many books as well. He passed away on June 23, 1995 at the age of 80.