The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Making Antiviral Drug to Treat Ebola

By Anna Dolgov

September 17, 2014



Medical personnel, wearing protective gear, take part in a drill with a dummy to demonstrate the procedures of transporting an Ebola victim, in Hong Kong.

Russia is beginning the production of an antiviral drug it has approved for the treatment of Ebola, a news report said, while a senior World Health Organization official urged stronger international efforts to contain the virus outbreak in West Africa.

The Russian Health Ministry has approved the production of the drug, Triazavirin, developed by researchers at the Institute of Organic Synthesis in the Urals region, said Sergei Kortov, a senior official at a regional patent service, the Novy Region news agency reported Tuesday.

The approval followed 20 years of research and a series of clinical trials on 100 volunteers from the Ural Mountain regions of Chelyabinsk and Yekaterinburg, and on employees of a flu research institute in St. Petersburg, the report said.

The drug was developed as a broad-range antiviral medication, and the website of St. Petersburg's Research Institute of Influenza says that studies have shown it to be effective against various types of the flu, including avian and swine flu, as well as against tick-borne encephalitis.

The report came amid warnings by a senior official at the World Health Organization that the Ebola outbreak in West Africa was spreading faster than anticipated.

Bruce Aylward, an assistant director general of WHO, said Tuesday in Geneva that the disease was rising at an "almost exponential" rate, with the number of reported cases reaching 4,985, including 2,461 deaths, half of them in the past three weeks, The New York Times reported.

"We don't really know where the numbers are going with this," Aylward was quoted as saying.

A treatment and containment plan proposed three weeks ago was intended to handle up to 20,000 cases, but now health officials feared that keeping the numbers "in the tens of thousands" would require a much faster response, Aylward was quoted as saying.

Russia's Health Minister Veronika Skvortsova said earlier this month that an experimental vaccine against Ebola had successfully passed preclinical trials and was ready to use, but he did not name the drug.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/09/17/russia-making-antiviral-drug-to-treat-ebola-a39492