

Manufacture of Vital Medicines Slashed Amid Russia's Recession

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia's pharmaceutical companies are slashing the production of vital medicines amid the economic downturn, putting the nation at risk of being left without affordable medical drugs, the Kommersant business daily reported Thursday, citing the Federal Anti-Monopoly Service (FAS).

A total of 197 medical drugs from the government's "vital and essential medicines list" and priced at 50 rubles (\$0.67) or less have already been removed from production, according to a letter the FAS sent to the government late last year, Kommersant reported.

About 160 other essential medicines in that price range are likely to follow suit, according to FAS.

Despite the medicines' low production costs, their manufacture has become unprofitable, the report said.

Under Russian law, the prices of medicines from the vital and essential list are set by the government, and FAS urged the Cabinet in its letter to increase the prices of the cheapest medicines by 5 rubles, Kommersant reported.

A previous attempt by FAS and the ministries of health, industry and trade, economics, and finance to get the prices on medicines from the essential list increased by 30 percent was rejected a year ago, Kommersant reported.

The government argued the price increase would be “unjustifiably large,” the report said.

Meanwhile, pharmaceutical companies and the Industry and Trade Ministry called for an 80 percent price increase, or for abolishing price control altogether, Kommersant reported.

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