

Russian Region Begins Selling Medical Alcohol from Vending Machines

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kaluga24.tv

The Kaluga region in Western Russia has begun selling thornapple tincture, a medicine consisting of 70 percent ethyl alcohol, from vending machines, Kaluga 24 television channel reported Tuesday.

Consumers can now get hold of a 100 ml bottle of the medicine for just 20 rubles (\$0.32), 24 hours a day, without having to visit a pharmacy.

Despite its purported ability to ease heart pains, Boyaryshnik, as it is known in Russian, is widely consumed by problem drinkers as an alcohol surrogate due to its high alcohol content and low cost.

The medicine has a cost-per-milliliter of spirit of just 0.21 rubles (\$0.003), making it far more cost effective than even the cheapest bottle of vodka.

[Izvestiya newspaper reported](#) last month that in a poll carried out in the Moscow region 13

percent of respondents said they used alcohol surrogates, with the practice growing during Russia's economic crisis.

The accompanying advertisements for the "Boyarka24" machines promise buyers "revenue of 36,000 rubles (\$576) a month, whilst claiming that demand for the "fluid" is "growing every day" because of "hard times."

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