

Alcohol-Based Medicines to Need Prescriptions After Siberian Poisoning Tragedy

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Anton Tushin / TASS

Russians will soon need a prescription to buy medicines which contain alcohol in a bid to stop them being used as cheap alternatives to vodka.

The crackdown follows the death of more than 70 people in a mass poisoning in the Siberian city of Irkutsk. All of the victims are believed to have drunk a bath tincture called boyaryshnik, which is usually used as “substitute” vodka for its high ethanol content. Local officials believe that the mixture was instead tainted by methanoyl, which was not included on the bottle's label.

"These medications [such as boyaryshnik] should certainly be sold in pharmacies, with the prescription of a doctor," Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Khloponin [told RIA Novosti](#).

“There is also no reason for these mixtures to be sold in pint-sized containers. We need regulations on packaging,” he said.

Read more from The Moscow Times: [Russia's Booming Illegal 'Pharmacy Alcohol' Industry](#)

Russian President Vladimir Putin announced on Wednesday that he wanted officials to slash alcohol tax to stop cash-strapped Russians resorting to “substitute” alcohol.

Between 12 and 15 million Russians are believed to drink medical tinctures and other alcohol-based cosmetic products such as perfume and aftershave every year, a report by the RBC news outlet revealed in November..

The Kremlin has asked officials to present their plans by March 31, 2017.

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