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85% of Russian Coronavirus Vaccine Volunteers See No Side Effects – Developer

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The double-blind trial for Sputnik V's long-term safety and effectiveness involves 40,000 volunteers.
Sergei Kiselyov / Moskva News Agency

Around 85% of Russian volunteers who receive the country's highly touted coronavirus Sputnik V vaccine report no side effects, according to the developer of the adenovirus-based shot.

The state-run Gamaleya Research Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology became the first in the world to register a Covid-19 vaccine in August before final clinical trials began the following month. The double-blind trial for Sputnik V's long-term safety and effectiveness involves 40,000 volunteers, 10,000 of whom are expected to receive a placebo.

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Alexander Gintsburg, the head of Moscow-based Gamaleya, told state television that Sputnik V's side effects include a fever of 38 degrees Celsius, headaches and muscle pain.

"Such side effects are observed in approximately 15% of the vaccinated people," Gintsburg told Rossia 24, according to the state-run TASS news agency.

"So it's not difficult to understand that 85% of vaccinated people experience no side effects or any inconvenience," he added.

The figures are consistent with those observed in the early stages of Sputnik V's final trials, when approximately 15% of 300 volunteers in September had complained of weakness, muscle pain and an occasional fever.

Gintsburg estimated that around 19,000 Russians have received the first shot of the two-dose Sputnik V vaccine so far and 6,000 have received both.

Several high-ranking government officials have reported taking part in the Sputnik V trials.

Around 50 countries have said they plan to purchase or were looking to purchase the vaccine.

Russian state-backed researchers have developed two other Covid-19 vaccines, which are undergoing various stages of government approval and clinical trials.

Meanwhile, Russia notched another record of 17,347 new Covid-19 cases Monday, pushing the overall number of infections to the world's fourth-highest at 1.53 million.

Polls have said that almost half of Russians do not plan to receive the Covid-19 vaccine at any point.

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