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Russia, After Confusion, Says Coronavirus Re-Vaccination Possible

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Re-vaccination with any of Russia's three domestically developed vaccines is possible “after 1-2 years of vaccination” with Sputnik V, an official said. **Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency**

Russian health officials said Tuesday that re-vaccination with any of Russia's domestically produced coronavirus vaccines after receiving the country's Sputnik V shot is possible, clarifying earlier remarks suggesting that antibodies could destroy future vaccine components.

Natalia Pshenichnaya, senior epidemiologist at national consumer protection watchdog Rospotrebnadzor, said earlier in the day that the Sputnik V shot’s long-term effectiveness could make future booster doses obsolete.

“If you vaccinate with the same vaccine of the same composition, then its components could be destroyed by the antibodies that are stored in our organism,” she had said.

In a subsequent statement on Rospotrebnadzor’s website, Pshenichnaya said her comments had been “misinterpreted.”

“What was meant is that revaccination with the EpiVacCorona and KoviVak vaccines is possible after 1-2 years of vaccination [with Sputnik V],” she said, referring to the two other Russian-made jabs.

The confusion surrounding revaccination comes amid Russia’s already slow vaccination campaign, with about 4 million out of some 146 million Russians receiving both doses in the two months since the rollout began.

President Vladimir Putin is set to receive one of Russia’s Covid-19 vaccines Tuesday — though out of the public eye — in hopes of reversing Russians’ vaccine skepticism.

Recent independent polling showed nearly two-thirds of Russian respondents calling Covid-19 a manmade biological weapon and less than one-third willing to get vaccinated.

A peer-reviewed study published last month assessed Sputnik V’s effectiveness at 91.6%. More than 50 countries have approved Sputnik V so far.

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