

Kremlin Critic Navalny's Health 'Deteriorating' in Prison, Aides Say

March 25, 2021



Navalny's aide said he started complaining of severe back pain and numbness in his leg late last week.
Babushkinsky District Court Press Service

Update: Russia's Federal Penitentiary Service (FSIN) [told](#) Interfax on Thursday that prison doctors have assessed Navalny's condition as "stable and satisfactory" following a medical examination.

Alexei Navalny's health is "deteriorating" in prison and his lawyers weren't allowed access to him for their latest scheduled meeting, the jailed Kremlin critic's aides [said](#) Wednesday, warning that his life may be in danger.

Navalny, who was moved to a prison colony east of Moscow this month, started complaining of severe back pain and numbness in his leg late last week, Navalny's regional network coordinator Leonid Volkov [wrote](#) on Telegram. According to Volkov, Navalny was unable to step on his leg and was only given two ibuprofen pills for the pain.

Related article: [Kremlin Critic Navalny Says Prison Like Being a 'Stormtrooper'](#)

“We believe that he may now be in the prison hospital and the IK-2 [prison] administration may be trying to hide this fact,” Volkov said.

Often described as one of Russia’s harshest prisons, IK-2 is notorious for psychological isolation and strict living conditions.

Volkov added that Navalny's lawyers were not allowed by prison staff to meet with him at their scheduled time on Wednesday.

“Under the circumstances known to us, a sharp deterioration in his health cannot cause anything but extreme concern,” he wrote.

Maria Pevchikh, the head of investigations at Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation, [tweeted](#) that “We believe that Navalny's life is in danger and demand immediate access to him for his lawyers.”

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We suppose that Navalny has possibly been transferred to the prison hospital, and the colony administration are trying to cover it up. We believe that Navalny's life is in danger and demand immediate access to him for his lawyers.

— Maria Pevchikh (@pevchikh) [March 24, 2021](#)

Navalny, 44, was sentenced to two and a half years in a penal colony last month for violating parole while recovering from a near-fatal poisoning in Germany.

European countries and the global chemical weapons watchdog determined that Navalny had been poisoned with a form of Novichok, a Soviet-designed, military-grade nerve agent, last August. Navalny accuses Russia’s security services of attempting to assassinate him on President Vladimir Putin’s orders, a claim the Kremlin denies.

The Kremlin critic’s jailing upon his return to Russia sparked a wave of nationwide protests in January and February, during which over 10,000 people were detained.

Navalny’s allies announced Tuesday that they plan to stage new protests once they [gather](#) half a million signatures of people who plan to attend.

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