

Has a 'Moscow Strain' of Coronavirus Emerged?

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The developers of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine said they are studying its effectiveness against the so-called "Moscow strain" of the virus. **Denis Grishkin / Moskva News Agency**

The developers of Russia's Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine are studying the jab's effectiveness against the so-called "Moscow strain" of the virus, they [told](#) the state-run RIA Novosti news agency Tuesday.

Gamaleya Center head Alexander Gintsburg's comments come as Moscow officials have [sounded the alarm](#) over the Russian capital's surge in new infections, with reported daily cases more than doubling in the past week.

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"We think that the vaccine will be effective, but we must wait for the study results," Gintsburg said.

While epidemiologists have confirmed mutated coronavirus strains originating from Russia, information about these strains remains limited.

Gamaleya's deputy head Denis Logunov [told](#) the RBC news website Saturday that new strains emerging in Moscow couldn't be ruled out.

Russia has struggled to breathe life into its flagging vaccination program, with Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov [remarking](#) Tuesday that vaccination rates "leave much to be desired."

"We should probably all be dissatisfied with the rate of vaccination," he was quoted as saying at a press briefing.

Despite the country's heavy touting of Sputnik V abroad, polls have shown a majority of Russians remain skeptical of Russian-made vaccines.

Russia [confirmed](#) its first cases of the Indian, British and South African variants of Covid-19, which are all believed to be more contagious but not necessarily more deadly, earlier this year.

The chief doctor of Moscow's main Covid-19 hospital Denis Protsenko [said](#) last week that hospital patients were not responding to treatments that were previously effective, indicating that mutated Covid-19 strains were present in the capital.

The Russian Direct Investment Fund that markets Sputnik V [announced](#) Tuesday that the vaccine has been found to be more effective against the Delta variant first detected in India than any other vaccine so far, saying it had submitted its research to an international peer-reviewed journal.

Peer-reviewed research published in The Lancet in January said Sputnik V is 91.6% effective against the coronavirus.

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