

Moscow Hospitals to Limit Treatment to Vaccinated Patients

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Muscovites will be required to present proof of their vaccination against Covid-19 prior to routine treatment. **Yury Kochetkov / EPA / TASS**

Moscow hospitals will no longer provide routine treatment to unvaccinated patients, health authorities [announced](#) Friday.

The announcement is the latest unprecedented measure taken as the Russian capital, a metropolis of 12 million people, saw a record number of new Covid-19 infections Friday. Officials link the drastic surge over the past week to new, more-contagious mutations of the virus, particularly the Delta variant first detected in India.

Related article: [Moscow's Coronavirus Infections Hit Record High](#)

Muscovites will have to present proof of their vaccination prior to treatment, the Moscow health department said.

Unvaccinated patients who require emergency care or treatment for cancer or blood diseases will still be able to seek treatment, as well as those with medical exemptions from vaccination.

The Moscow health department pointed to the rising risk of infection spreading in the city's roughly 50 hospitals as the impetus for the new restrictions.

"Every day, patients are transferred from Moscow's clinics to its Covid hospitals. If a week ago this number was 130 cases per day, then yesterday it was already almost 200," the department.

Moscow has started to rapidly reprofile hospitals to increase the number of beds available to coronavirus patients. The number of designated Covid-19 beds is now almost back at levels seen during the first peak of hospitalizations last spring.

Also on Friday, city officials [announced](#) additional restrictions and incentives to drive up flagging vaccination rates. The city ordered 60% of service sector workers to get vaccinated earlier in the week.

Vaccination requirements may also apply to this September's State Duma elections, Anna Popova, the head of Russia's health watchdog, [said](#) Friday.

"Our forecast for September is as follows: We are ready together with you to ensure safe voting so that the expression of the will of our citizens can be fully realized," Popova said at a meeting of Russia's Central Election Commission.

"We probably would not recommend such a form [at-home voting] in this situation," she added.

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