The Moscow Times
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Repeat Coronavirus Vaccination Needed After 6 Months, Russian Health Minister Says

June 21, 2021

One's number of Covid-19 antibodies gradually declines after vaccination or recovering from the virus.
Moskva News Agency

Russians who were vaccinated against the coronavirus over six months ago should revaccinate themselves for extra protection as the country grapples with the third wave of the pandemic, Health Minister Mikhail Murashko said Monday.

Moscow, the epicenter of the pandemic in Russia, reported its highest-ever number of Covid-19 cases in a single day this weekend as the fast-spreading Delta variant first detected in India accounts for 90% of all infections in the capital. The variant is more resistant to Covid-19 antibodies which gradually decline after one is vaccinated or recovers from the virus.

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Overwhelm Russia

“During the period of the epidemic’s rise, both those who were sick and those who were vaccinated over six months ago will need to be revaccinated,” Murashko said in an interview on state television.

Murashko said the one-dose version of Russia’s Sputnik V vaccine, Sputnik Light, will be available for those who wish to revaccinate from June 25.

Once the current surge in infections subsides, people will only need to vaccinate against Covid-19 once per year, he said.

Murashko also called for farther-reaching coronavirus in large cities like Moscow and St. Petersburg due to the sharp increase in new cases.

A number of Russian regions including Moscow have ordered mandatory vaccination for certain categories of the population.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Monday that revaccinating Russia's population against Covid-19 is “inevitable” and Moscow authorities said they are now working on rolling out a citywide revaccination campaign.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin last week spoke about the need for re-vaccination and said he himself was vaccinated a second time one year after his first vaccination.

Only about 13% of Russia’s population has been vaccinated since it launched mass vaccination in January.

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