

Russians Threaten to Sue Over Vaccine Switch-Up — Reports

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The volunteers claim they were given a less effective coronavirus vaccine instead of the Sputnik V jab they signed up for. **Moskva News Agency**

Several Russian volunteers who say they were given a less effective coronavirus vaccine instead of the Sputnik V jab they had signed up for are considering pursuing legal action, the independent Novaya Gazeta newspaper has [reported](#).

Seven patients from six cities including Moscow and Vladivostok told the outlet they were either misled into thinking they had received Sputnik V or met with a lack of Sputnik V shots at their vaccination sites.

They were instead inoculated with EpiVacCorona, Russia's second approved Covid-19 vaccine embroiled in claims by late-trial study participants that it does not produce an immune response, Novaya Gazeta reported Friday.

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Vektor Institute, the facility previously known for Soviet-era biological warfare research that developed EpiVacCorona last year, [said](#) earlier in June that nearly half of EpiVacCorona recipients lacked antibodies nine months after receiving the shot. Early-trial results said that all adults had developed antibodies.

Peer-reviewed research earlier this year said that Sputnik V was 91.6% effective.

Lawyer Georgy Melkov told Novaya Gazeta that Russia's public health protection law requires healthcare organizations to obtain patients' signed consent on forms that tell them which shots they receive.

"The lack of information about the vaccine given to a patient, as well as its replacement without the patient's consent, is a violation of their rights," Melkov was quoted as saying.

"Depending on the severity of the consequences and other factors, those responsible for such violations may be brought to civil, disciplinary, administrative and even criminal liability," Melkov added.

Russian health officials previously claimed that EpiVacCorona had 100% efficacy.

The vaccine substitutions were reported in parallel with another high-profile scandal alleging a black market scheme that offers official vaccine certificates, which are required to obtain certain services in a growing number of Russian regions.

Law enforcement authorities in Moscow [said](#) they have launched at least 24 criminal cases into the fake vaccine certificates.

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