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Russia Develops Modified Sputnik V Jab for Delta Variant

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Health Minister Mikhail Murashko has said that the original Sputnik V vaccine is 83% effective against the Delta variant. **sputnikvaccine.com**

The developers of Russia's Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine have developed a modified version of the jab for the highly contagious Delta variant, Interfax reported Thursday.

"The vaccine design is already in the refrigerator," Alexander Gintsburg, head of the state-run Gamaleya Institute that developed Sputnik V, told Interfax.

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Gintsburg noted however that it's too early to judge the modified vaccine's effectiveness.

"Everyone has started to make a vaccine based on the Delta strain's sequence, but whether it will be better than already existing vaccines against the Delta strain, no one can say,"

Gintsburg said.

Health Minister Mikhail Murashko has said that the original Sputnik V vaccine is 83% effective against the Delta variant.

The Russian Direct Investment Fund that funds Sputnik V has said that Gamaleya would publish a peer-reviewed study on the jab's efficacy against Covid-19 mutations by May, but the institute has not yet done so.

Russia continues to see record-setting coronavirus deaths as the Delta variant, first identified in India, sweeps across the nation. The country's excess fatality toll is one of the highest in the world, both in absolute terms and adjusted for population size.

Russia has grappled with a stuttering vaccination campaign despite offering four domestically made vaccines at no cost and several regions introducing mandatory vaccinations for public-facing workers.

Just 22.9% of the country's population has received two vaccine doses as of Thursday, according to independent monitors.

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