

Russia Halts Orders for Second Covid Vaccine – Vedomosti

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The EpiVacCorona vaccine. **Artyom Geodakyan / TASS**

The Russian Health Ministry has suspended orders of the country's second coronavirus vaccine due to low demand nationwide, the Vedomosti business daily [reported](#) Tuesday.

Citing the federal health watchdog's drug distribution database, the outlet said not a single batch of the EpiVacCorona vaccine has been distributed to Russia's 85 regions since the start of 2022. It added that Russia's Health Ministry and EpiVacCorona's distributor have not submitted production requests so far this year.

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"There are grounds to [assume] suspended production of this vaccine," Vedomosti quoted an unnamed employee of one of Russia's scientific institutes as saying.

Health departments in all 85 Russian regions last received new batches of EpiVacCorona in late November or early December, Vedomosti reported. The date of its next deliveries is unknown.

At least two regions — Moscow and the Nenets autonomous district — have run out of the shots, while several others have only a few thousand left.

EpiVacCorona is a two-shot peptide vaccine developed by the Siberia-based Vektor Institute.

An unnamed Vektor spokesperson told Vedomosti that EpiVacCorona is being manufactured according to established plans but did not clarify whether it is currently being produced.

Vektor said it produced a total of 13 million EpiVacCorona doses in 2021, compared with the quarter-million doses of Russia's first registered Covid-19 vaccine, Sputnik V, produced that year.

Health Ministry and pharmaceutical executives said the current supply of EpiVacCorona is sufficient to cover existing needs, Vedomosti reported.

The Russian government approved EpiVacCorona for use in October 2020, before the start of large-scale Phase 3 clinical trials.

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