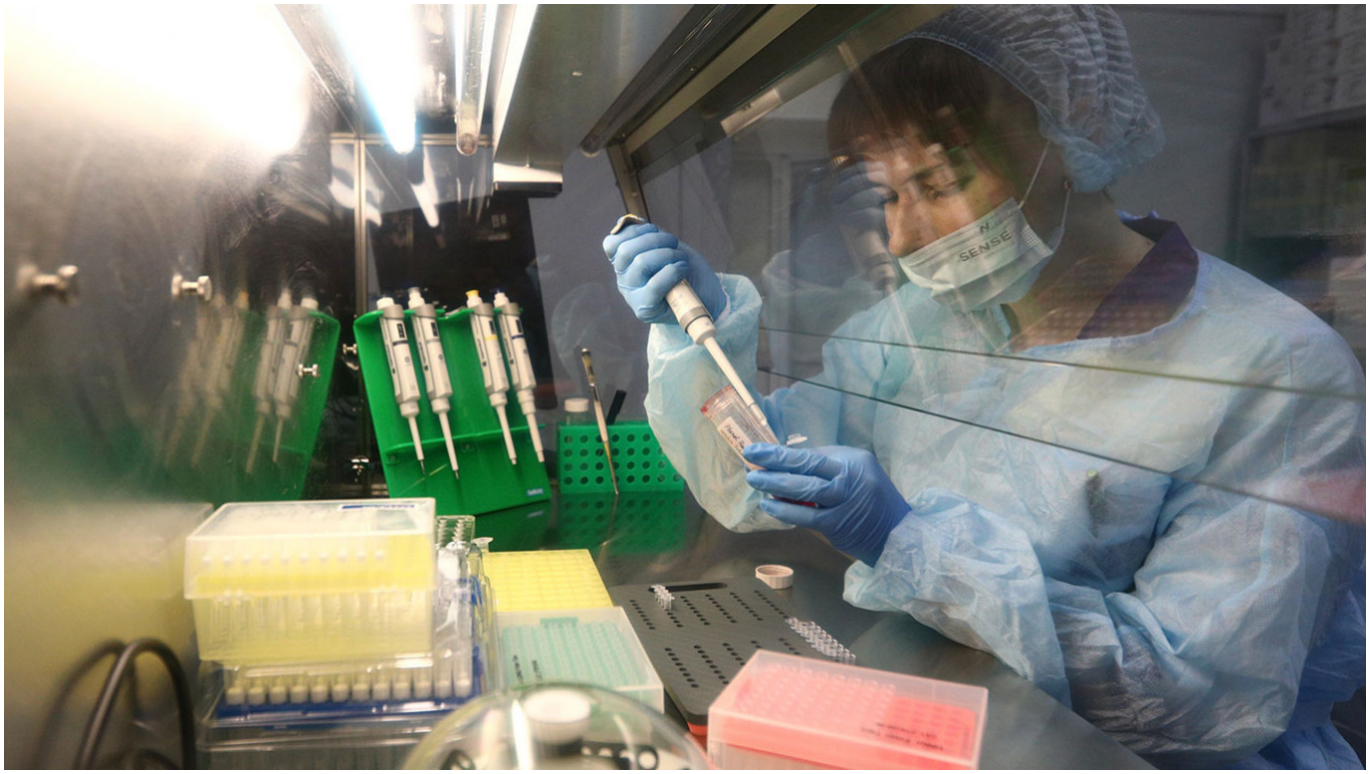
The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Coronavirus in Russia: The Latest News | Feb. 24

February 24, 2022



Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

Russia has confirmed **18,315,292 cases** of coronavirus and **378,784 deaths**, according to the national coronavirus information center. Russia's total excess fatality count since the start of the coronavirus pandemic is at least 995,000. Under half the population is fully vaccinated.

Embed:

Embed:

Feb. 23: What you need to know today

- Russia reported 137,642 new Covid-19 infections and 785 deaths over the last 24 hours.
- Russians and foreigners will be able to receive a coronavirus QR-code health pass based on the results of an antibody test from Monday.
- Latvia will allow Russian tourists to enter the country from March 1 as long as they

present a negative PCR test, authorities in the Baltic country announced. Previously, visitors needed a European vaccination certificate to cross Latvia's borders. While Latvian authorities haven't yet resumed issuing of tourist visas, the country is open to individuals with Schengen visas.

- Austria will also allow entry to Russians who present a negative PCR test starting on Feb. 22, the country's tourism ministry told Russian media.

Feb. 22

— Russia reported 135,172 new Covid-19 infections and 796 deaths Tuesday.

Feb. 21

— Russia reported 152,337 new Covid-19 infections and 735 deaths Monday.

Feb. 20

— Russia reported 170,699 new Covid-19 infections and 745 deaths Sunday.

Feb. 19

— Russia reported 179,147 new Covid-19 infections and 798 deaths Saturday.

Feb. 18

— Russia reported 180,071 new Covid-19 infections and 784 deaths Friday.

Feb. 16

— After a three-day decline, Russia saw an an increase of Covid-19 infections with a total of 179,284 new infections and 748 deaths.

Feb. 15

— Russia reported a total of 166,631 new infections and 704 deaths.

— Russia saw a record number of coronavirus hospitalizations Tuesday, with 21,833 patients hospitalized.

Feb. 14

— Russia reported a total of 180,456 new infections and 683 deaths.

Feb. 13

— Russia reported a total of 197,949 new infections and 706 deaths.

Feb. 12

— Russia reported a total of 203,766 new infections and 729 deaths.

Feb. 11

— Russia reported a total of 203,949 new infections and 722 deaths.

— Russia reported more than 200,000 new Covid-19 infections for the first time since the start of the pandemic.

— Russians will be able to take an antibody test to obtain a coronavirus health pass from Feb. 21, the Health Ministry said Tuesday.

— QR codes will be issued to Russians who test positive for Covid-19 antibodies, regardless of their vaccination status.

Feb. 10

— Russia reported a total of 197,076 new infections and 701 deaths.

Feb. 9

— Russia reported a total of 183,103 new infections and 669 deaths.

Feb. 8

— Russia reported a total of 165,643 new infections and 698 deaths.

— Almost 12,000 children with Covid-19 are currently being treated in hospitals, while children make up about 20% of the country's total number of coronavirus cases, Russian Health Minister Mikhail Murashko announced.

Feb. 7

— Russia reported 171,905 new coronavirus infections and 609 deaths.

Feb. 6

— Russia reported a record 180,071 new coronavirus infections and 661 deaths.

Feb. 5

— Russia reported another record number of new coronavirus infections. A total of 177,282 new infections and 714 deaths were recorded over the last 24 hours.

Feb. 4

— Russia reported another record number of new coronavirus infections. A total of 168,201 new infections and 682 deaths were recorded over the last 24 hours.

— Russia's Sputnik V vaccine has a 70.5% efficacy against the Delta variant of the coronavirus six months after vaccination, the jab's developers said Friday. The findings were published as part of the results of Phase 3 medical trials into the vaccine. Omicron has displaced Delta as the dominant strain of the coronavirus in Moscow and is sweeping rapidly across the country.

Feb. 3

— Russia reported a new record number of new coronavirus infections. A total of 155,768 new infections and 667 deaths were recorded over the last 24 hours.

— Russia plans to cancel mandatory isolation requirements for people who come into contact with somebody infected with Covid-19, Anna Popova, the head of the Rospotrebnadzor consumer health watchdog said Friday. She said the forced quarantine rules "have lost their reasoning" with the surge in Omicron cases.

Feb. 2

— Russia reported more than 100,000 new coronavirus cases for the fifth consecutive day. The country's coronavirus task force confirmed 141,883 new Covid-19 infections over the past 24 hours and 678 fatalities.

Feb. 1

— Russia reported more than 100,000 new coronavirus cases for the fourth consecutive day. The country's coronavirus task force confirmed 125,836 new Covid-19 infections over the past 24 hours and 663 fatalities.

— Russia's Labor Ministry has recommended that all enterprises send as many of their employees to remote work as possible due to the surge in Covid-19 cases.

— A growing number of Russian regions are re-introducing coronavirus lockdown measures due to the surging Omicron variant, even as the Kremlin on Monday repeated that there will be no nationwide lockdown due to the variant's spread. Fifteen regions across the country have suspended routine medical care due to the overwhelming number of hospitalizations, while five regions have sent schoolchildren to remote learning and four regions banned mass gatherings. The Tula region south of Moscow took the most drastic step in the latest virus surge by announcing a 10-day regionwide holiday.

Jan. 31

— Russia reported more than 100,000 new coronavirus cases for the third consecutive day. The country's coronavirus task force confirmed 124,070 new Covid-19 infections over the past 24 hours and 621 fatalities.

— Russia's excess fatalities reached 995,000 by the end of 2021, according to The Moscow Times' analysis of official statistics. The country also saw its largest natural population decline since the end of the Soviet Union, registering a fall of more than one million in 2021, the Rosstat statistics service said Friday.

Jan. 30

— Russia reported more than 100,000 new coronavirus cases for the second consecutive day. The country's coronavirus task force confirmed 121,228 new Covid-19 infections over the past 24 hours and 617 fatalities.

Jan. 29

— Russia reported more than 100,000 new coronavirus cases for the first time ever. The country's coronavirus task force confirmed 113,112 new Covid-19 infections over the past 24 hours and 668 fatalities.

— Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said it was "clear that the real number of people who have Covid-19 is slightly higher than the official statistics."

— Moscow does not plan to introduce new lockdown measures in response to the Omicron variant, the RBC news website reported, citing two sources close to the Mayor's Office.

Jan. 28

— Russia reported a record number of new coronavirus infections for the eighth day running. A total of 98,040 new infections and 673 deaths were recorded over the last 24 hours. Case numbers have doubled in the span of a week.

Jan. 27

— Russia reported a record number of new coronavirus infections for the seventh day running. A total of 88,816 new infections and 665 deaths were recorded over the last 24 hours. Case numbers have doubled in the span of a week.

— The number of Covid-19 patients admitted to hospital in the capital jumped 22% on Thursday and is now running close to peaks recorded during the two previous waves of the virus in 2021.

Jan. 26

— Russia reported a record number of new coronavirus infections for the sixth day running. A total of 74,692 new infections and 657 deaths were recorded over the last 24 hours.

— Children in St. Petersburg will be barred from sporting, cultural and entertainment establishments from Jan. 28-Feb. 13, city authorities announced.

— Russia has cut the quarantine period for people infected with Covid-19 from 14 to seven days, Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin announced Tuesday.

Jan. 25

— Russia reported a record number of new coronavirus infections for the fifth day running. A total of 67,809 new infections and 681 deaths were recorded over the last 24 hours.

— Around 70% of people infected with the Omicron variant in Russia are unvaccinated, said Anna Popova, the head of Russia's consumer health watchdog, in a televised meeting.

— Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said the capital was likely to see growing coronavirus cases for at least two more weeks, as the Omicron variant fuels a record rise in infections.

Jan. 24

— Russia reported a record number of new coronavirus infections for the fourth day running.

A total of 65,109 new infections and 655 deaths were recorded.

Jan. 23

— Russia reported a record number of new coronavirus infections for the third day running. A total of 63,205 new infections were recorded over the last 24 hours and 679 deaths.

Jan. 22

— Russia reported a record number of new coronavirus infections as the Omicron variant continued its rapid spread across the country. A total of 57,212 new infections were recorded over the last 24 hours and 681 deaths.

Jan. 21

— Amid rising cases, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin on extended a requirement for businesses in the capital to ensure 30% of their employers were working from home.

— Russia plans to cut the isolation period from 14 to seven days for those infected with Covid-19, Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova said.

— Russian lawmakers have agreed to withdraw from consideration an unpopular bill for QR-code health passes to enter public spaces, State Duma Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin said.

Jan. 19

— Russia reported 33,899 new Covid-19 infections and 698 deaths.

— Cases in Russia's second city of St. Petersburg set a new record high Wednesday with 4,382 new confirmed cases. In Moscow, where Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said Omicron has become the dominant strain, new infections set their third-highest daily toll since the start of the pandemic on Wednesday of 8,795.

Jan. 18

— Russia reported 31,252 new Covid-19 infections and 688 deaths.

Jan. 17

— Russia reported 30,726 new Covid-19 infections and 670 deaths.

— The European Medicines Agency (EMA) is still awaiting additional documentation on Sputnik V before it can proceed with the vaccine approval process, the EU's Ambassador to Moscow said Monday. The head of the World Health Organization (WHO) in Russia said Sunday the vaccine's developers had submitted all the required information needed for its approval process, and further inspections will take place in February, though other WHO officials later appeared to contradict this, saying they were still waiting for a full data package from Russia.

Jan. 16

— Russia reported 29,230 new Covid-19 infections and 686 deaths.

Jan. 15

— Russia reported 27,179 new Covid-19 infections and 723 deaths.

Jan. 14

— Russia reported 23,820 new Covid-19 cases and 739 deaths

— Russia will delay controversial legislation over the use of coronavirus health passes for access to public spaces, officials said Friday, citing "new challenges" presented by the Omicron variant.

— Foreigners will be able to obtain a coronavirus health pass — QR code — in Russia by taking an antibody test, Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova said Friday. The passes will be valid for six months.

— Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said Friday that Omicron had become the dominant coronavirus strain in the Russian capital, accounting for more than half of all new infections.

Jan. 13

— Russia reported 21,155 new Covid-19 infections — a 17.8% increase overnight — and 740 deaths.

Jan. 12

— Russia reported 17,946 new Covid-19 infections and 745 deaths.

— Russia has so far confirmed 698 official cases of the Omicron variant, Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova announced at a meeting on Wednesday.

— President Vladimir Putin said health authorities only have "a couple of weeks" to prepare for the next wave of the pandemic.

— Russia delivered fewer than 80 million doses of its Sputnik V and Sputnik Light vaccines to other countries in 2021, according to Unicef data cited by The Washington Post. The jab's developers had initially planned to export doses for more than 500 million people, but have been beset by production and delivery delays. The vaccine has also yet to be approved by either the World Health Organization (WHO) or the European Medicines Agency (EMA).

Jan. 11

— Russia reported 17,525 new Covid-19 infections and 783 deaths.

— The presence of the Omicron variant in the Russian capital is already "significant," Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said. He warned that the city would see a major increase in infections within 7-10 days, adding that "it is quite possible that we will face a worse situation than in previous waves."

— Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu ordered the military to limit vacations and trips abroad for servicemen and women due to the spread of the Omicron variant.

— Russia will be "covered" by the Omicron variant and should brace for a "very high" number of Covid-19 cases, Alexander Gintsburg, the head of the state-run Gamaleya Institute which developed the country's Sputnik V vaccine, said.

Jan. 10

— Russia confirmed 15,830 Covid-19 infections and 741 deaths.

Jan. 9

— Russia confirmed 16,246 Covid-19 infections and 763 deaths.

Jan. 8

— Russia confirmed 16,568 Covid-19 infections and 796 deaths.

Jan. 7

— Russia confirmed 16,735 Covid-19 infections and 787 deaths.

Jan. 6

— Russia confirmed 15,316 Covid-19 infections and 802 deaths.

Jan.5

— Russia confirmed 15,772 Covid-19 infections and 828 deaths.

Jan. 4

— Russia confirmed 15,903 Covid-19 infections and 834 deaths.

Jan. 3

— Russia confirmed 16,343 Covid-19 infections and 835 deaths.

Jan. 2

— Russia confirmed 18,233 Covid-19 infections and 811 deaths.

Jan. 1

— Russia confirmed 19,751 Covid-19 infections and 847 deaths.

Dec. 31

— Russia confirmed 20,638 Covid-19 infections and 912 deaths.

— Russia recorded more than 115,000 excess deaths during November 2021, according to

official statistics published Thursday — a new record high since the start of the pandemic.

— Russia's Health Ministry on Thursday advised Russians against traveling abroad for the New Year holiday due to the spread of the Omicron variant.

— Over 100 cases of the Omicron variant have been detected in Russia, Rospotrebnadzor head Anna Popova said Thursday.

Dec. 30

— Russia confirmed 21,073 Covid-19 infections and 926 deaths. Cases in Moscow rose from 1,798 on Wednesday to 2,661 on Thursday, a nearly 50% increase.

Dec. 29

— Russia confirmed 21,119 Covid-19 infections and 932 deaths.

Dec. 28

— Russia confirmed 21,922 Covid-19 infections and 935 deaths.

Dec. 27

— Russia confirmed 23,210 Covid-19 infections and 937 deaths.

Dec. 26

— Russia confirmed 23,721 Covid-19 infections and 968 deaths.

Dec. 25

— Russia confirmed 24,946 Covid-19 infections and 981 deaths.

Dec. 24

— Russia confirmed 24,703 Covid-19 infections and 998 deaths.

Dec. 23

— Russia confirmed 25,667 Covid-19 infections and 1,002 deaths.

— Moscow confirmed over 3,000 new Covid cases, a 60% jump compared to Wednesday.

Dec. 22

— Russia on Wednesday confirmed 25,264 Covid-19 infections and 1,020 deaths.

Dec. 21

— Russia on Tuesday confirmed 25,907 Covid-19 infections and 1,027 deaths.

— Russia has detected 41 cases of the Omicron variant of Covid-19 so far, health authorities

said Tuesday.

Dec. 20

— Russia confirmed 27,022 Covid-19 infections and 1,019 deaths.

Dec. 19

— Russia confirmed 27,967 Covid-19 infections and 1,024 deaths.

— Russia could send free shipments of its Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine to Africa in the future, the head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), which finances and promotes the jab, has said.

Dec. 18

— Russia confirmed 27,434 Covid-19 infections and 1,076 deaths.

Dec. 17

— Russia confirmed 27,743 Covid-19 infections and 1,080 deaths.

— Russia claimed its Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine provides "robust" long-term protection against the Omicron variant, disputing the findings of an independent study which found the Russian jab produced no antibody response whatsoever to the new highly transmissible variant.

Dec. 16

— Russia has detected the Omicron variant in 25 people so far, Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova said.

— Russia confirmed 28,486 Covid-19 infections and 1,133 deaths.

— Russian lawmakers approved legislation in a first reading that will require people to show health passes to access public places like bars and restaurants, as the country gears up for a winter Covid wave.

— Russia has not yet provided all the information requested by the WHO to certify the country's flagship Sputnik V vaccine, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said. "It's true that some information needed for certification has not yet been submitted. We had a different understanding of what information was needed and how it has to be submitted, we have different standards, etc," Peskov told journalists, adding that the Kremlin is not worried by the lengthy approval process the vaccine has faced.

Dec. 15

—Russians with coronavirus antibodies from both foreign and domestic vaccines will be able to get a QR code valid for six months, Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova said Monday.

— Russia will scrap the proposed bill that would require QR codes to access public

transport, State Duma speaker Vyacheslav Volodin announced on his Telegram channel on Sunday.

Dec. 6

— Russia has confirmed its first reported cases of the Omicron variant. The new strain was detected in two people who traveled into the country from South Africa, Russia's consumer and health watchdog Rospotrebnadzor said. Another 10 Russians who returned from South Africa have tested positive for the coronavirus and their samples are currently being analyzed to determine the variant, the agency added.

Dec. 3

— Russia said it recorded its deadliest month in decades in October, with the total number of excess deaths since the start of the coronavirus pandemic surpassing 810,000.

Dec. 2

— Russia will require citizens entering the country from South Africa or neighboring countries to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival due to the Omicron variant starting Dec. 2, Rospotrebnadzor head Anna Popova announced.

Nov. 30

— Russian President Vladimir Putin called for mutual recognition of vaccines against the coronavirus to help curtail the pandemic, as concern grows around the world about the fast-spreading Omicron variant.

— Russians returning from countries with which Moscow has not formally restored air travel will have to quarantine for 14 days, Anna Popova, the head of Russia's Rospotrebnadzor consumer and health watchdog said. The validity of health passes obtained by a negative PCR test will also be reduced from 72 to 48 hours. Popova also advised Russians not to travel abroad for New Year holidays as part of a package of recommendations outlined in response to the Omicron variant.

— Putin has ordered the government to create an updated action plan for the Omicron strain by next week, he said at an investment forum.

Nov. 29

— As many as 1,500 Russian tourists have been left stranded in South Africa as countries scramble to ban flights from the region, media reported Monday.

— The backers of the Russian Covid-19 vaccine Sputnik V said Monday that the jab is effective against the new Omicron coronavirus variant but they were also developing an adapted booster.

Nov. 28

— The new Omicron variant may be spreading across Russia by tourists returning from Egypt,

Senator and Honored Doctor of Russia Vladimir Krugly said Sunday. Russia's consumer protection watchdog Rospotrebnadzor, which leads the country's Covid-19 response efforts, later denied Krugly's claims.

Nov. 25

— St. Petersburg aims to vaccinate 80% of its population by mid-January through vaccination, its Governor Alexander Beglov said Thursday. He said 67% of the city is currently vaccinated.

— Russian lawmakers are seeking to recognize those vaccinated against the coronavirus with foreign jabs, the Izvestia daily reported Thursday.

Nov. 24

— President Vladimir Putin repeated his stance that Covid-19 vaccination should be voluntary as regions and cities tighten restrictions on the unvaccinated.

— He added that he has received a nasal Covid-19 vaccine, days after saying he received a Sputnik Light booster shot.

— Russia has registered a Covid-19 vaccine for children 12 to 17 years old, Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova announced.

Nov. 23

— Russia and Hungary have agreed to mutually recognize each others' vaccination certificates, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said, marking the first such agreement between Russia and another country.

Nov. 22

— A Siberian region of Russia has become the first in the country to impose self-isolation rules for residents who haven't yet been vaccinated against Covid-19.

— The republic of Tatarstan became the first Russian province to enforce QR code passes on public transit earlier Monday.

Nov. 21

— President Vladimir Putin said he had had a third dose of a Covid vaccine. "I had it two hours ago," Putin said on state television channel Rossiya 24, assuring viewers that his booster injection of the Sputnik vaccine had been painless.

Nov. 19

— Russia's herd immunity has surpassed 50%, Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova said.

Nov. 17

— Two more Russian coronavirus vaccines are currently undergoing preclinical trials, Health

Minister Mikhail Murashko said. So far, Russia has authorized four vaccines: Sputnik V, the one-dose Sputnik Light, EpiVacCorona and CoviVak.

— There is "no end in sight" to the Covid-19 pandemic in Russia yet, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

— A Far East Russian region has become the first in the country to introduce vaccine passports for internal flights as federal lawmakers race to mandate health passes for public transport and other areas.

Nov. 16

— Russia will resume air travel with Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Costa Rica and Mongolia from Dec. 1, authorities announced. It will also lift all remaining restrictions on flights with Mexico, Cuba and Qatar starting that day. Starting Dec. 12, train connections to Finland will resume.

Nov. 16

— U.S. pharmaceutical giant Pfizer has received approval to conduct trials of Paxlovid, a novel oral antiviral treatment aimed at preventing and treating Covid-19. Ninety people in a handful of Russian cities will take part in the trials.

Nov. 12

— Russia will introduce health passes for access to public places, restaurants and intercity trains and planes in a radical move designed to boost Russia's sluggish vaccination campaign.

Nov. 9

— St. Petersburg mandated vaccination against Covid-19 for all residents over 60 years old as well as people with certain chronic illnesses.

— Russia is now the world leader in coronavirus deaths for the first time since the start of the pandemic.

— The developer of Russia's coronavirus vaccine Sputnik V has said Moscow should make jabs mandatory as inoculation rates remain low despite record deaths and campaigning by authorities.

Nov. 8

— Russia's nationwide paid holiday aimed at curbing the spread of the coronavirus came to an end Monday. Some regions are keeping the restrictions in place and many others are implementing digital passes showing proof of vaccination or recent Covid-19 recovery.

— QR codes proving one's vaccination continue to be valid for one year after vaccination, Russia's Health Ministry and Digital Development Ministry said Monday following reports that the validity period had changed to 6 months.

Nov. 2

— Russia's single-dose Sputnik Light vaccine produces a strong antibody response among recipients, according to research published in leading medical journal The Lancet. Sputnik Light is the first dose of Russia's two-dose Sputnik V vaccine, which is the backbone of Russia's domestic vaccination campaign and is being sold around the world.

Nov. 1

— Russian authorities said that doctors were under "extraordinary" strain due to surging coronavirus cases in Europe's worst-hit country.

— The Novgorod region in northwestern Russia has become the first region to extend the non-working week. It will order all non-essential workers to take a mandated paid holiday for an additional week after Nov. 7.

Oct. 27

— The Kremlin cautioned Russians against traveling during the Oct. 30-Nov. 7 non-working period ordered by Moscow to stem a spike in coronavirus infections and deaths.

— The Israeli government will allow tourists vaccinated with Russia's Sputnik V vaccine to enter the country starting Nov. 15.

Oct. 26

— All of Russia's 85 regions across 11 time zones have now mandated vaccines for certain categories of workers, Anna Popova, who heads the federal health watchdog that is leading the country's response to the virus, said.

— The European Union expects countries including Russia to investigate the sale of fake Covid-19 certificates online and take appropriate measures, an EU spokesperson told RBC. The cybersecurity company Kaspersky said last week that it uncovered counterfeit travel certificates made to look as if they were issued in France or Poland being sold for an average price of $300 on the Telegram messaging app.

— Authorities in annexed Crimea said they plan to purchase mobile refrigerators to store bodies in the city of Simferopol as Covid-19 deaths continue to rise and the city's morgues are overwhelmed.

Oct. 25

— Russian authorities were investigating nurses and a doctor in St. Petersburg accused of selling fake coronavirus vaccination certificates, as the country faces a deadly new wave. The Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, said a doctor and three nurses are suspected of pocketing at least 100,000 rubles ($1,430) from 12 people after selling official certificates without having administered jabs.

— President Vladimir Putin instructed regional leaders to order restaurants to close between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. and to ban all entertainment events.

— Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin imposed a partial citywide lockdown between Oct. 28-Nov.

7 to stem the spread of the virus.

— The restrictions suspend businesses, services, catering, sports, recreation, entertainment and film screenings with the exception of the sale of essential goods like medicines and food. Mass events, except those authorized by health officials, will be banned, and theater and museum attendance will be capped at 50% with mask-wearing and digital-code rules in place. In-person public services will be suspended and kindergarteners and school students sent home between Oct. 28 and Nov. 7.
The Moscow region introduced identical restrictions shortly after Sobyanin's announcement.

— President Vladimir Putin will not meet people face-to-face during Russia's nationwide week-long paid holiday starting on Oct. 30 designed to curb Covid infections amid record deaths, his spokesman said.

— The pace of vaccinations in Russia has accelerated following a string of regions imposing vaccine mandates for workers in certain sectors of the economy and vaccine passports for entry into indoor venues, according to the Gogov website which tracks vaccine uptake across the country. It estimates Russia is administering more than 300,000 first doses each day — up from around 120,000 a day earlier October.

Oct. 23

— Russia's second city St. Petersburg will impose a partial lockdown from Oct. 30-Nov. 7, authorities announced.

Oct. 21

— Sochi is bracing for an influx of tourists during public holidays starting Oct. 30 designed to stop the spread of the coronavirus. Occupancy rates in hotels are set to be at least 75%, the city's mayor said — equivalent to peak summer months at the Black Sea resort. The city has introduced vaccine passports for entry into restaurants and bars in a bid to stop the spread of the virus despite the mass inflow of tourists.

— Russia has detected a new sub-variant of the Delta strain of the coronavirus, which risks compounding the country's spiraling infections and deaths, a senior Russian government scientist warned.

— The European Union's drug regulator will not approve Russia's Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine until at least the first months of 2022, Reuters reported.

Oct. 20

— President Vladimir Putin announced a non-working week in Russia from Oct. 30-Nov. 7. Putin pleaded with Russians to get vaccinated and said the public holidays could be extended further if cases do not start to fall.

— Nationwide, 87% of hospital beds reserved for coronavirus patients are occupied, Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova said in a televised meeting with President Vladimir Putin.

Oct. 19

— Some 1,100 medical staff died from Covid-19 in Russia during the first six months of 2021, the chair of the State Duma's budget committee said. That is more than twice the number who succumbed to the virus in 2020, he added.

— Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin has backed plans for a nationwide non-working week starting Oct. 30. The proposal was put forward by Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova during a televised government meeting. Mishustin said the strict measures — effectively a paid vacation or orders for workers at non-essential businesses to stop going into their place of work — were "now necessary" given increased numbers of cases, hospitalizations and deaths. Golikova said some regions should introduce the non-working week earlier, on Oct. 23 and also called for unvaccinated pensioners to start self-isolating at home.

Oct. 18

— Russia's second city, St. Petersburg, announced it would tighten restrictions to battle a surge in Covid-19 cases, introducing a health pass to regulate access to crowd events.

— Moscow authorities will start fining public transport passengers whose face masks do not cover their nose and mouth, a transit official said.

— South Africa's health products regulator said it would not approve Russia's Sputnik V Covid-19 vaccine due to concerns it could increase the risk of HIV infection among men. The decision was based on earlier studies testing the safety of a modified form of adenovirus — a type of virus that causes respiratory infections — known as the Ad5 and contained in the Russian jab.

— Russia will allow family members of foreigners who live in Russia to enter the country, the Foreign Ministry said. The relaxation will allow people from countries not yet on Russia's designated list of open countries to receive a special entry permit to come to Russia, provided they have a close relative living in Russia.

Oct. 16

— According to Rospotrebnadzor head Anna Popova, 38 of Russia's 85 regions have introduced vaccine mandates for certain categories of citizens and employees working in designated sectors of the economy, such as retail and hospitality.

Oct. 15

— Russia will resume regular air travel with the Bahamas, Iran, the Netherlands, Norway, Oman, Slovenia, Tunisia, Sweden and Thailand starting Nov. 9, the national Covid-19 headquarters announced.

Oct. 14

— Health Minister Mikhail Murashko has called on doctors who are self-isolating or even retired due to the pandemic to get vaccinated and return to work due to record increases in Covid-19 infections and deaths.

Oct. 12

— The Moscow region that surrounds the capital has imposed vaccine mandates for sales, food, transport, public service, hair salon and fitness club employees.

— Roughly 235,000 of Russia's 255,000 Covid hospital beds nationwide are occupied, with 6,000 patients on ventilators, Health Minister Mikhail Murashko said.

— Russia's western exclave of Kaliningrad has suspended planned medical procedures as it battles an "extremely difficult" surge in coronavirus cases and hospitalizations. The central Mari El region also canceled routine operations and medical treatment from Tuesday, warning that it had run out of free hospital beds and may soon have to start treating patients in corridors.

Oct. 11

— The Kremlin described Russia's Covid fatality toll as "high" and the country's vaccination rate as "unacceptably" low, even as it rejected new restrictions so as to protect the economy.

— Moscow launched free express coronavirus tests at 20 locations across the city, as the capital continues to battle with rising infection rates. The tests give a result in 15 minutes, but are less effective than the gold standard PCR tests. Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said rapid testing would allow "socially responsible citizens" to ensure they are not spreading the virus.

— The Leningrad region that surrounds St. Petersburg will require residents to present QR codes proving their vaccination status or a negative PCR test in order to enter theaters, cinemas, swimming pools and gyms through Nov. 15.

Oct. 8

— Russia reported 65,000 excess fatalities in August in a 45% jump on pre-pandemic mortality rates, official data showed. The country's overall number of excess deaths since the start of the coronavirus stands at 660,000.

— EU Ambassador to Russia Markus Ederer said that the country "has repeatedly postponed" the timing of the inspection requested by the European Medicines Agency which has slowed down the approval process of the vaccine in the EU. The Russian Ministry of Health responded by saying that it presented the EU with all the necessary documents that the block requested.

Oct. 7

— A World Health Organization delegation will visit Russia this month as part of its approval procedure for Russia's Sputnik V vaccine, Russian Direct Investment Fund head Kirill Dmitriyev said.

— The problem behind WHO's suspension of Sputnik V's approval process has been resolved, said Mariangela Simao, WHO's assistant director general for access to medicines, vaccines and pharmaceuticals.

— Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin has announced that mass PCR testing will be introduced in Russia's capital in 1-2 weeks.

— Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova said the federal government recommends Russian regions introduce QR-codes for attending mass events, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency reported.

Oct. 4

— Russia's top cabinet official on Monday criticized the country's stalling vaccination rates for failing to slow the spread of Covid-19 as Russians die in numbers not seen since the start of the pandemic.

AFP contributed reporting.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/02/24/coronavirus-in-russia-the-latest-news-feb-24-a69117