The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

U.S. Drugmaker to Halt MMR Vaccine Supplies to Russia – Kommersant

July 04, 2022



Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency

The U.S. drugmaker MSD will stop supplying Russia with vaccines against measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox, the Kommersant business daily reported Monday.

MSD had informed a number of its contractors to stop supplying its Varivax chickenpox vaccine and the M-M-R II vaccine to Russia, the newspaper said.

The National Immunobiological Company (Natsimbio), MSD's local partner that was established by Russian defense and technology conglomerate Rostec, said localized production of MSD's vaccines had stopped.

Russia's state medical regulator Roszdravnadzor confirmed receiving a notice from MSD Pharmaceuticals in June, but said the country has sufficient stockpiles of MMR vaccines.

Varivax accounted for nearly one-fifth of chickenpox vaccines in Russia, with 2021 sales amounting to 162.8 million rubles ($3 million). M-M-R II accounted for 1.5% with 14 million

rubles ($257,000) in sales.

Related article: Russians Inoculated With Expired Coronavirus Vaccine

MSD has 25 vaccines and drugs that have analogues in Russia, according to Kommersant.

Eleven of its vaccines that have Russian analogues accounted for less than 50% of sales in Russia last year, Nikolai Bespalov, development director of the RNC Pharma consultancy, told the outlet.

MSD can halt vaccine supplies one year after notifying the Health Ministry of its plans under Russian law, Antonina Oblasova, co-founder of Russia's Herd Immunity non-profit, told Kommersant.

MSD, which is known as Merck & Co. in North America, will reportedly continue sales of drugs that have no analogues in Russia.

Western pharmaceutical giants such as Pfizer, Novartis and AbbVie announced the suspension of investments in Russia in retaliation to Moscow's invasion of Ukraine in February.

Kommersant previously reported that Russia was running low on medical supplies produced abroad following a wave of crippling Western sanctions and international brand exits from the market.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/07/04/us-drugmaker-to-halt-mmr-vaccine-supplies-to-russia-kommersant-a78188