

# COVID-19 vaccine scammers proliferating on the 'dark web'

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Online COVID-19 vaccine scams are becoming more widespread,

security experts warn.

In the last six weeks, there has been a sharp rise in the number of COVID-19 [vaccine](#) ads on the "[dark web](#)"—which connects unidentified buyers with anonymous sellers—and the asking prices have doubled or even quadrupled, Mark Ostrowski, head of engineering for the cybersecurity company Check Point, told *CBS News*.

Searches conducted by his team revealed a wide range of offers, including a deal of 14 doses for \$300—or \$200 below the original \$500 price—that came with a promise of a 100 percent refund if the doses did not arrive. Another seller offered a bulk discount of 10,000 bottles of vaccine for \$30,000, and another was asking \$1,500 for four doses of a "Chinese vaccine."

Ostrowski's team even sent a Bitcoin payment to one seller to see what would happen. "Our expectations were low, and, of course, they weren't met," Ostrowski said.

As far as he can tell, none of the sellers actually has COVID-19 vaccines, *CBS News* reported. In December, INTERPOL warned [law enforcement](#) in 194 countries about organized crime groups targeting COVID-19 vaccines, both physically and online.

**More information:** [CBS News Article](#)

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