

Argentina starts distributing local Sputnik vaccine

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Argentina on Thursday began distributing the first batch of more than one million doses of the Russian Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine produced domestically.

The South American country announced in June that a local

pharmaceutical company would manufacture the [vaccine](#) using an antigen provided by the Moscow-based maker of Sputnik.

So far Laboratorios Richmond, the pharmaceutical company tasked with the effort, has produced 995,000 units of the first dose and 152,000 of the second.

Inoculation with Sputnik V requires two doses that differ from one another and were not designed to be swapped or mixed with other vaccines.

The Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) that financed Sputnik V and markets it abroad said that Laboratorios Richmond is expected to produce two million more doses in August.

Last December, Sputnik V became the first coronavirus vaccine to be offered in Argentina but there have been major delays in shipping the second dose.

The government has threatened to cancel its contract with Russia and last week it started administering Moderna and AstraZeneca vaccines in place of the second Sputnik dose.

The government has prioritized giving first doses to its 45 million people. So far, nearly 59 percent of the population have received at least one dose, and only 20 percent have received both shots.

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