

WHO restarts evaluation of Russian COVID-19 shot

November 12 2021



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The World Health Organization said Friday it had "restarted" a process that could grant emergency authorisation for the Russian-made Sputnik V vaccine against COVID-19, after several months in limbo.

"There is a lot of interchange of information that needs to happen" but

"the process has restarted", WHO Assistant Director General Mariangela Simao told reporters in Geneva.

WHO emergency use authorisation would be a seal of quality for the Russian shot, as well as making wider recognition more likely and possibly freeing up travel for those vaccinated with it.

It could also open the way to Sputnik V being used by the Covax initiative that aims to get vaccines to the [poorest countries](#).

Neither US nor EU medicines watchdogs have so far granted authorisation for Sputnik V, which has been used in Russia and some other countries since late 2020.

Simao said that the WHO also "still has to receive the full dossier on Sputnik" and was "in conversations with the applicant... different parts of the Russian government".

"There are pending issues regarding inspections at the manufacturers," she added.

President Vladimir Putin hailed Russia at a recent G20 summit in Rome as the "first country in the world to approve a [vaccine](#) against COVID-19", vaunting Sputnik V's "safety and effectiveness".

An AFP tally based on official statistics shows that the vaccine is used in 48 countries.

So far, the WHO has granted emergency authorisations to COVID-19 shots from India's Bharat Biotech, Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, AstraZeneca, Johnson&Johnson and Sinopharm.

Citation: WHO restarts evaluation of Russian COVID-19 shot (2021, November 12) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-11-restarts-russian-covid-shot.html>

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