

Russia suffers shortage of children's medicines
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Moscow, 10 July, ITAR-TASS correspondent Anna Bazhenova: There is currently a disastrous situation on the Russian pharmaceuticals market as regards supplies of medicines for children. There is less than 5 per cent of demand, Aleksandr Baranov, chairman of the executive committee of the Russian Paediatricians' Union and academician of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences, said in an interview with ITAR-TASS at Russia's "Children and Medicines" forum.

He explained that medicines suited to children were the main problem. Virtually all medication in chemist shops and hospitals came in adult dosages. The few medicines that were sold with a view to children's dosages came from abroad and cost at least twice as much as Russian-made versions. Baranov said that Russian paediatricians "have been trying to have a federal programme entitled 'Healthy Children' adopted for three years now. It includes, amongst other things, supplying children with the necessary vitamins, microelements and nutritional supplements." When the Russian Finance Ministry recently agreed to the programme, however, funding was slashed to such a paltry figure that there would be five rubles a year for each Russian child, the academician said.