

# *Cuba could use Russian drug Avifavir against COVID-19*

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Havana, July 12 (RHC)-- Cuban health authorities said today that if the Russian drug Avifavir shows positive effects in the treatment of patients with COVID-19, it could be added to the care protocol developed in this Caribbean nation against that disease.

"If it has positive effects, our country will acquire it for the treatment of patients," stated Dr. Francisco Durán, National Director of Epidemiology of the Ministry of Public Health, during the usual morning press conference where the data on COVID-19 in Cuba and the world are updated.

Avifavir, developed by the Russian Direct Investment Fund and the pharmaceutical group ChemRar, was approved by the Ministry of Health of that Eurasian country at the end of May.

As explained by Dr. Durán, it is a generic version of Favipiravir (another Japanese antiviral used for several years against Influenza); but there is evidence of its effectiveness especially in the treatment of patients in the initial and middle stages of the disease.

Some experts say it's a bit early to identify it as a COVID-19 drug, since clinical trials are still being conducted with it. Dr. Duran recalled that currently there are about 25 clinical trials being developed in different countries of the world.

On the other hand, he referred to the results shown by Cuba with the treatment and care protocol for patients diagnosed with the virus, which includes a large number of nationally produced medicines.

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