

ZEMBLA: China's Medicinal Power, Episode 1 Medicijnmacht China tijdens de coronacrisis

What is the world's dependence on China?

The majority of active ingredients found in the world's pharmaceuticals are produced in China and India. In the first months of 2020, many of the Chinese medicine factories lay dormant as a result of the Corona virus. Shortly after these factories started up again, India closed its borders for several weeks for the export of medicines. China and India produce nearly 80 percent of the world's medicinal products. In recent years, medicine shortages have increased due to, among other reasons, supply chain problems in these two countries. This dependence has put the world at risk. Producers of medicinal active ingredients warn, that because of the Corona pandemic, countries all over the world could be confronted with further shortages of essential medicines in a time when they are most needed.

How did it come to this? For years, experts have warned us of our dependency on China and India, and are extremely concerned. Why did we outsource even our medicine supply? China has become the pharmacy of the world and countries stand in line to get their supplies. The question isn't whether or not the outbreak of this virus will have an effect on medical supplies, but for how many weeks and on what scale? Dutch investigative journalism programme Zembla, investigates global access to medicine in a time of crisis.

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