

Ex-Miss Russia Jailed in U.S. in Phony Prescription Case

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NEW YORK — A former Miss Russia charged with forging prescriptions has been sent to a New York jail after repeatedly showing up late to evaluations for a drug court program.

A judge ordered Anna Malova held without bail at least until the evaluations are done.

Malova has pleaded not guilty to charges of filling or trying to fill bogus prescriptions for painkillers at New York pharmacies 14 times over the last 18 months. Even after being arrested in February and May 2010, she tried to get more pills with phony prescriptions last June and again just three months ago, the city Special Narcotics Prosecutor's office said.

Malova took prescription pads from the offices of two psychiatrists — one an addiction specialist — and wrote herself prescriptions for the painkiller Vicodin and the anti-anxiety drug Klonopin, prosecutors said.

Malova's lawyer, Robert Gottlieb, said Tuesday that all her legal troubles arise from a drug-abuse problem, and she has been in counseling since last year. A series of recent drug tests

have been negative, he said, but she is still working to get her life together.

"This is a very complicated woman with serious issues that she very much wants to address and conquer," he said. "She's doing her very best to get better."

In 1998, Malova was Miss Russia and finished in the top 10 in the Miss Universe pageant. She was a physician in her native county, according to her statements at the 1998 pageant.

Malova, 39, is now being considered for a drug-court program designed to channel addicted offenders to treatment instead of jail. If approved for the program, she'd get treatment and could ultimately get those charges dismissed.

If not, the top charge against her carries the possibility of up to seven years in prison if she's convicted.

Meanwhile, Malova was arrested on a shoplifting charge last week. She was released with an appearance ticket and hasn't had her court date on that charge yet.

"Whatever happened there, again, is a symptom of the underlying problems that she is committed to overcoming," Gottlieb said.

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