

By GRAIG NUNIS / DECEMBER 7, 2023 / 7:22 AM

Adopt healthy lifestyle, pandemic protocols to combat rise in Covid-19 cases, says Malaysian Medical Association



Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz says Malaysians must adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle to strengthen their immune system – the body’s first line of defence against pathogens.

While concerned about the recent rise in Covid-19 cases, Dr Azizan said it was not unexpected. Malaysia recorded 3,626 Covid-19 cases for the 47th Epidemiology Week from Nov 19-25, a 57.3 per cent increase from the week before (2,305). During the same period, Singapore recorded 22,094 new Covid-19 infections, up from 10,726 cases, the previous week.

As of Dec 3, the ministry said there were 15,327 active cases in Malaysia.

The rise in cases in Singapore also saw Indonesian Health Minister Budi Gunadi Sadikin earlier this week urging Indonesians to get the Covid-19 vaccine, as the vaccination programme is free until Dec 31.

Dr Azizan said although Malaysia has a high vaccination rate, it is still important for people to adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle to strengthen their immune system.

“Covid-19 cases are expected to spike from time to time. What is important is for people to pay more attention to their health. A strong immune system is probably the most overlooked aspect in preventing Covid-19,” said Dr Azizan.

“We must not forget the good habits the pandemic taught us ... wash hands frequently with soap and water or use a hand sanitiser.”

She advised those with flu-like symptoms to perform a self-test and, if confirmed positive with Covid-19, to immediately isolate for up to five days. People are also advised against going to crowded areas, unless necessary.

“Those in the high-risk group should wear face masks when in the company of others, as well as taking the recommended booster shots,” said Dr Azizan, who urged those interested in getting their booster vaccines to search for the availability on the MySejahtera mobile application.

Meanwhile, checks by *Twentytwo13* at several pharmacies in the Klang Valley, namely Shah Alam, Setapak, and Ampang, showed that test kits were either out of stock or were low in supply. There was, however, a sufficient supply of face masks.

A sales personnel at a pharmacy in Wangsa Maju said their old stock of test kits had expired. A pharmacist in Ampang said many of her customers preferred a certain brand of test kit, and she was waiting for the new stocks to arrive.

On Tuesday, the Health Ministry reminded the public that the use of face masks was required for positive cases. The use of the mask was also required for patients, visitors, and workers of health facilities when facing, interacting, or treating patients.

The ministry also encouraged those with respiratory symptoms, and high-risk individuals to put on face masks, especially when in crowded spaces or in public transportation.