

# Address medicine supply issues speedily

Thursday, 02 Jun 2022  
11:42 AM MYT

THERE is a shortage of certain medicines in the market which has been noted lately. This is not a new phenomenon and has been seen ever since countries around the world started emerging from lockdown measures and resumed economic activities.

Coupled with an unprecedented amount of demand for common medications brought on by the high incidence rate of the Omicron Covid-19 variant, many pharmaceuticals, both manufacturers and distributors alike, were caught off guard.

The industry responded by placing higher orders for products from manufacturers overseas. In the case of local manufacturers, they scrambled to increase their manufacturing capacities, which are, however, also dependent on raw materials sourced from other countries.

As this is a worldwide problem, imports of both the finished products as well as raw materials are affected.

Local manufacturers are also limited by their capacity to ramp up production. It is not a simple matter to increase production just to address the shortfall of supplies in the market.

Raw materials aside, manufacturing plants are built to certain specifications which may not allow any sudden and massive increase in the rate of production.

We do hope for a correction in the supply and demand of pharmaceuticals in the Malaysian market soon. If uncorrected, even supply of other previously unaffected medications will be disrupted.

The public is also advised to not panic buy and unnecessarily hoard medications which are not immediately needed, to avoid aggravating the situation.

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