

MMA: Lift Indoor Mask Mandate, Covid Manageable Now

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The Malaysian Medical Association says masks should only be worn on certain public transport where there are crowds for a long time, nursing homes, elder care centres, and health care facilities.



Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr Koh Kar Chai speaks at a press conference in Kuala Lumpur on May 10, 2022. Picture courtesy of MMA.

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 1 – The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) yesterday urged the government to drop the requirement to wear face masks indoors, except in crowded public transport, care homes, and health care facilities.

The country's largest doctors' group noted that Covid-19 hospitalisations are currently low and that reported Covid-19 infections in Malaysia have reached a plateau.

According to the CovidNow site, Covid-19 patients currently comprise 21.5 per cent of available hospital beds amid daily Covid-19 admissions hovering at about 500 nationwide.

Daily new Covid-19 infections have been dropping since late July, currently numbering at about 2,000 plus a day. Most documented coronavirus infections now depend on self-reporting on MySejahtera, with the Ministry of Health (MOH) requiring only people who test positive to self-isolate for five days.

Reported Covid-19 deaths average at fewer than 10 a day.

“On a whole, the current Covid-19 situation in this country is still manageable. The public which have been living with Covid-19 in its midst all this while are on a whole rather well versed with the disease,” MMA president Dr Koh Kar Chai said in a statement yesterday.

“It is time that we seriously consider the doing away of face mask wearing in enclosed spaces, the only caveat being certain public transport which involves the cramming of people for a long duration of time, nursing homes, elder care centres and health care facilities.”

Although MOH previously lifted outdoor mask mandates, while still recommending the use of face masks in indoor settings, Umno, Perikatan Nasional, and PKR functions last weekend saw many without face coverings at the political gatherings.

Singapore lifted its general indoor mask mandate last Monday, requiring only the use of face coverings in public transport modes like the MRT, LRT, and public buses; care homes; health care facilities; and ambulances. Masks will also be optional on private transport modes like taxis, school buses, and private bus services.

Singapore’s MOH also reportedly said air passengers do not have to wear masks on flights to or from countries without mask mandates, as long as the airline does not impose such a requirement.