

Stop panic buying of medicines, MMA tells public

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MMA has advised the people not to hoard medications that are not immediately needed. (Bernama pic)

PETALING JAYA: The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) has advised the public not to resort to panic buying of medicines in light of the recent shortage of certain medications in the market.

It said the panic buying had been happening since countries started emerging from Covid-19 lockdowns and resumed economic activities.

MMA said it hoped to see a correction in the supply and demand of such medicines in the market soon.

Apart from the resumption of economic activities after lockdowns, MMA president Dr Koh Kar Chai said the "unprecedented" demand for common medications brought on by the high incidence rate of the Omicron variant had caught pharmaceutical manufacturers and distributors off guard.



Dr Koh Kar Chai.

"If uncorrected, even supply of other previously unaffected medications will be disrupted," he warned in a statement today.

"An advice to the public is not to panic buy and unnecessarily hoard medications which are not immediately needed, to avoid aggravating the situation."

Koh said the pharmaceutical industry had responded to the surge in demand by placing higher orders for products from manufacturers overseas.

He said local manufacturers had scrambled to increase their manufacturing capacities which were, however, also dependent on raw materials sourced from other countries.

Since the shortage was a worldwide problem, he said, imports of both finished products as well as raw materials had been affected.

Local manufacturers were limited by their capacity to ramp up production, and they "cannot simply increase production just to address the shortfall of supplies in the market".

He said that raw materials aside, manufacturing plants were built to certain specifications which may not allow any sudden increases in the rate of production.