

Ivermectin for COVID-19 Treatment: Expert Says Further Studies Needed

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In response to the debate over COVID-19 potential drug ivermectin, Professor at the UGM Faculty of Pharmacy Zullies Ikawati warned the public against its use without a prescription. According to her, ivermectin has not received approval for use to cure or prevent COVID-19, and its dosage guidelines and consumption rules remain unknown.

Ivermectin is an anti-parasitic drug to treat people with specific parasitic infestations and animals with heartworm disease and certain parasites. She explained that the drug was not common in Indonesia because the particular worms or parasites it cured were rare. Current circulation was intended mostly for animals.

“There is much-unverified information circulating on Whatsapp. We don’t know whether it is safe or those claiming the drug to be proven are true. Non-prescribed use of the drug may cause harm,” she said.

Professor Zullies added that several countries had conducted initial studies and clinical trials to prove its efficacy for COVID-19 therapies. Dosage and duration of use varied per country. In



Australia, some researchers published their in vitro findings regarding the potential of ivermectin to have an antiviral effect on SARS-CoV-2. However, she examined that a mere in vitro study was insufficient to ensure its effectiveness and safety for humans.

“Our Drug and Food Control Agency can use clinical trials data from those countries as long as the number of subjects is adequate and methodology, dosage, and outcome parameters are appropriate,” she said.

She advised the public to cross-examine those COVID-19 survivors who claimed to have recovered from taking this drug. It needed further studies and comparative data to be labeled proven. Moreover, current treatment guidelines have already included many other proven drugs for COVID-19 therapies. For safety, kindly only consume those prescribed by doctors.

“There must be further research to determine whether ivermectin is effective and takes part in the cause of those survivors’ recovery. Don’t ever use it without a prescription,” said Zullies.

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