

ESSENTIAL DRUGS IN SHORT SUPPLY

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Shortage of some essential drugs across the capital after government's decision to bring down their prices have left patients suffering from various serious diseases like diabetes and liver ailments in lurch.

The drugs that are in short supply include Albumin (a life-saving protein), Zyloric (uric acid control), Ocid (acidity) and Eltroxin (a medicine for thyroid).

Pharmacists in various areas claimed that drug manufacturers have either reduced or stopped supply of certain essential drugs after government's initiative to control their prices.

"There is shortage of several vital drugs like Zyloric, Ocid and Eltroxin and Albumin. Drug companies said there is shortage of raw materials for formulation of drugs. What can we do,"



asked Rippon Nath, CEO of Nath Brothers Chemist in Connaught Place. As shortage of medicine brought to light absence of any mechanism for monitoring supply of medicines, president of All India Chemists and Distributor's Federation Kailash Gupta demanded constitution of a monitoring committee to ensure regular supply of essential drugs.

"Companies have reduced production of these essential medicines because their profit margins have gone down," he claimed.

When contacted, a spokesperson of leading drug manufacturer GlaxoSmithKline

Pharmaceuticals said the "shortage in supplies is not related to our medicines being under regulations."

"GSK supports the Indian government's intention to increase affordability of essential medicines for patients who need them," the spokesperson said.

He further said, "We are currently facing some issues across our manufacturing network that is impacting our ability to supply. We are doing our utmost to bring supply back to normal as soon as possible and the normal supply is expected to be restored in the next few months." When contacted, a top Cadila healthcare official said, "There is no shortage of any drug manufactured by the company. We continue to produce at our previous levels. There is no cut in either production or supply. From our end, the supply situation is fine and we have not received any complaints."

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