

AKHBAR : KOSMO
MUKA SURAT : 7
RUANGAN : NEGARA

KKM telah mengeluarkan 2,866 kompaun berkaitan kawalan penyakit demam denggi

Kompaun denggi RM1.43 juta

Oleh MUHAMMAD NAJIEB
AHMAD FUAD

PUTRAJAYA – Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) mengeluarkan sejumlah 2,866 kompaun bernilai RM1.43 juta berkait pencegahan dan kawalan penyakit demam denggi pada bulan lalu.

Ketua Pengarahnya, Datuk Dr. Muhammad Radzi Abu Hassan berkata, tindakan itu diambil mengikut Akta Pemusnahan Serangga Pembawa Penyakit (APSPP) 1975.

"Sejumlah 410 kes telah didaftar untuk tindakan mahkamah dan dalam masa yang sama sebanyak 86 kes telah disabitkan kesalahan di mahkamah dengan jumlah denda RM199,800," katanya dalam kenyataan semalam.

Beliau memberitahu, KKM turut mengeluarkan sejumlah 5,937 kompaun bernilai lebih RM1.46 juta di bawah Peraturan-Peraturan Kawalan Hasil Tembakau (PPKHT) 2004.

"Melalui penguatkuasaan itu, 25,583 premis yang dilawati, sejumlah 14,299 notis kesalahan dikeluarkan," ujarnya.

Muhammad Radzi berkata, KKM juga mengarahkan sebanyak 263 premis ditutup semen-



SEORANG petugas melakukan semburan asap mencegah nyamuk aedes di sekitar kejiranan. – GAMBAR HIASAN

tara di bawah Seksyen 11 Akta Makanan 1983.

"Jumlah premis yang diken-

kan perintah penutupan sementara ini adalah 2.85 peratus daripada keseluruhan 9,212

premis makanan yang diperiksa menerusi penguatkuasaan akta tersebut.

“

Tindakan penutupan sementara premis makanan yang dikuatkuasakan oleh KKM adalah sebagai suatu langkah menjamin kebersihan premis serta makanan yang dihidangkan

MUHAMMAD RADZI

"Tindakan penutupan sementara premis makanan yang dikuatkuasakan oleh KKM adalah sebagai suatu langkah menjamin kebersihan premis serta makanan yang dihidangkan," jelasnya.

Beliau menegaskan, tindakan penguatkuasaan merupakan pilihan terakhir yang diambil oleh KKM.

Dalam pada itu, Muhammad Radzi turut menyeru orang ramai menjalankan tugas dan tanggungjawab agar keberkesanan pelaksanaan aktiviti kesihatan mencapai tahap optimum.

AKHBAR : KOSMO
MUKA SURAT : 16
RUANGAN : NEGARA

HSA nafi pesakit lewat terima rawatan seperti didakwa ejen insurans

PETALING JAYA – Pengurusan Hospital Sultanah Aminah (HSA) menafikan dakwaan ada pesakit lewat menerima rawatan di Jabatan Kecemasan dan Trauma (JKT), pada Sabtu lalu.

Pengarahnya, Dr. Sal Atan berkata, pihaknya telah membuat siasatan dalaman selepas tular satu hantaran yang dimuat naik seorang pengguna aplikasi X, berhubung waktu kehadiran dan kelewatan menerima rawatan.

Katanya, pesakit telah didaftarkan di JKT pada pukul 10.33 malam sebelum diambil tanda 'vital' di Zon Hijau pada pukul 10.45 malam.

"Rawatan awal telah diberikan kepada pesakit pada pukul 11 malam sebelum pegawai perubatan melihat pesakit pada pukul 3.30 pagi.

"Susulan itu, pesakit dirujuk kepada pegawai perubatan dari Jabatan Ortopedik pada pukul 4.10 pagi. Pesakit didiagnosis dengan kepatahan tulang clavicle (tulang selangka).

"Pegawai perubatan tersebut memberikan rawatan conservative dan pemberian janji

ISU TULAR



temu rawatan susulan pada 24 Mac depan (Rabu) pukul 8 pagi di Klinik Ortopedik," katanya dalam kenyataan semalam.

Tambah Sal, pesakit tersebut kemudiannya dibenarkan discaj dengan sijil cuti sakit dan turut dibekalkan ubat.

Ujarnya, pihak hospital memandang serius perkara itu dan sentiasa berusaha untuk memberi perkhidmatan yang terbaik kepada orang awam.

Terdahulu, seorang pengguna aplikasi X dikenali sebagai @iqakhairuzamann memuat naik beberapa ciapan menerima rawatan di hospital itu.

Dia mendakwa terima rawatan di hospital kerajaan dari pukul tujuh malam sehingga keesokan harinya untuk mendapat giliran imbasan X-ray.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 9
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

KKM beri kuasa kepada 189 pegawai penguat kuasa

KUALA LUMPUR - Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) telah memberi kuasa kepada 189 pegawai penguat kuasa seperti polis bantuan, pihak berkuasa tempatan (PBT) dan agensi lain di bawah Seksyen 3 Akta Makanan 1983 atau Akta 281 bagi memastikan pematuhan orang ramai terhadap larangan merokok di tempat yang tidak dibenarkan.

Timbalan Menteri, Lukanisman Awang Sauni berkata, proses itu akan diteruskan di bawah Akta Kawalan Produk Merokok Demi Kesihatan Awam 2024 (Akta 852) selain pemerksaan masyarakat melalui penglibatan badan bukan kerajaan (NGO), badan profesional dan lain-lain.

"Sehingga kini, terdapat 189 pegawai penguat kuasa dan polis bantuan iaitu 95 penguat kuasa daripada Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur (DBKL), 77 polis bantuan daripada Kumpulan Sunway dan 17 polis bantuan Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Sungai Buloh telah diturunkan kuasa bagi memastikan pematuhan orang ramai," katanya. - *Bernama*

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 3
RUANGAN : NATION

Tooth decay among top dental health issues, says ministry

PETALING JAYA: Around 94.6% of Malaysian adults need some form of dental treatment, with tooth decay being a top problem.

In fact, six in 10 adults require dental care due to tooth decay, says a survey by the Health Ministry.

This is based on the National Oral Health Survey of Adults conducted in 2022, involving 16,734 people aged 15 and above.

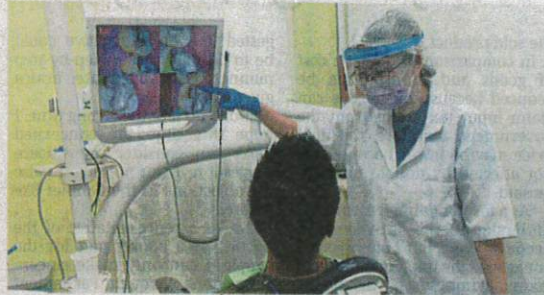
The findings also showed that nine of 10 adults in Malaysia had unhealthy periodontium, which is related to the tissue and structure that holds our teeth in place.

"The top three dental health problems among Malaysians are tooth decay, gum disease and oral cancer," said the Health Ministry when contacted in conjunction with World Oral Health Day today.

It said insufficient tooth brushing and flossing and high sugar consumption contribute to tooth decay by providing fuel for bacteria.

"Smoking and tobacco use are big risk factors for gum disease.

"Heavy alcohol consumption and chewing betel quid also



Close look: Dentist Dr Muk Yuet Peng treating a patient at the Ng and Ng dental clinic in Subang Jaya. — AZHAR MAHFUF/The Star

increase the risk of oral cancer," the ministry said.

It said the areca nut, often included in betel quid, is considered a group 1 carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer.

According to the survey, three in 10 Malaysian adults practise chewing betel quid.

The survey also showed that one in two adults needed dental prostheses, or solutions to replace miss-

ing or damaged teeth.

Examples of prosthesis are full or partial dentures, which are usually removable, and fixed prostheses like crowns (a dental cap that restores a broken tooth).

Around 31.4% needed partial dentures, while 10.2% needed fixed prosthesis.

Meanwhile, a Malaysian adult has an average of 24 permanent teeth — ideally, it should be 32.

About one million, or one in 20

adult Malaysians aged 35 and above, have no teeth at all.

Further, 63% of adults did not get their teeth checked within a year.

Only 37% attended a dental appointment, according to the survey.

On the number of dentists in Malaysia, the ministry said there is a need for more but the figures are expected to grow.

"Next year, Malaysia is projected to have 5.1 dentists for every 10,000 people.

"By 2030, it is expected to rise to 6.5 dentists per 10,000 population," it said.

Currently, the estimated dentist to population ratio is 4.5 per 10,000 population (one dentist for every 2,240 people), based on 2023 figures.

However, experts are urging for a more equal distribution of dentists in the country.

Malaysian Dental Association president Assoc Prof Dr Mas Suryalis Ahmad said many dental facilities are concentrated in areas with high population density such as Selangor.

"Many Malaysians living in Sabah and Sarawak have issues accessing dental services.

"As such, more facilities should be set up there and other identified areas," she said.

Dr Mas Suryalis said it is timely for the government to promote oral health, especially among low socio-economic groups.

"Government initiatives such as Peka B40 should incorporate dental care as one of the categories eligible for claims," she said.

Dr Mas Suryalis also suggested that the government widen the water fluoridation programme to all states.

Water fluoridation is the controlled adjustment of fluoride to public water supply to reduce tooth decay.

"Water fluoridation is recognised as one of the most cost-effective and safe measures to prevent tooth decay ... (It) should be expanded across the country."

FOR MORE:
See page 7

Avoiding a mouthful of problems

Poor oral hygiene could lead to heart disease, diabetes

PETALING JAYA: Bad oral health is not just about cavities and painful toothaches — it could lead to serious illnesses such as heart disease, clogged arteries and diabetes, an expert said.

Dentist Dr Koh Wen Thong said she is of the opinion that there is low awareness among Malaysians about the importance of oral health and the above consequences of neglecting the said aspect.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), poor oral hygiene can also lead to oral cancer due to factors such as tobacco, alcohol and areca nut.

The simplest act of brushing teeth at least twice daily and flossing once a day, Dr Koh said, could make a big difference.

"Awareness is low among Malaysians.

"They only see a dentist when they are already experiencing problems like pain or emergencies.

"If you wait until you are already in pain, it means it has become serious and you have to pay for expensive treatment," she said.

Dr Koh said a regular check up twice a year would allow dentists to detect any issues in their early stages.

A normal check-up, even at private clinics, would only cost between RM20 and RM30.

"If you have a very small cavity, you won't feel pain.

"When it's big and you feel the pain, the tooth may have to be extracted," she added.

According to the Health Ministry's data, almost 95% of Malaysians require dental treatment with tooth decay being a top problem.

Dr Koh said everyone must start taking care of their oral hygiene from a young age.

"For children, if we can detect problems such as mouth-breathing or severe crowding when they are seven to nine years old, we can correct such problems before they become more severe."

"People usually miss out on flossing when it is actually very important," she added.

Mohammad Abd Wahab, 41, said he has always encouraged his teenage daughter to take care of her oral hygiene.

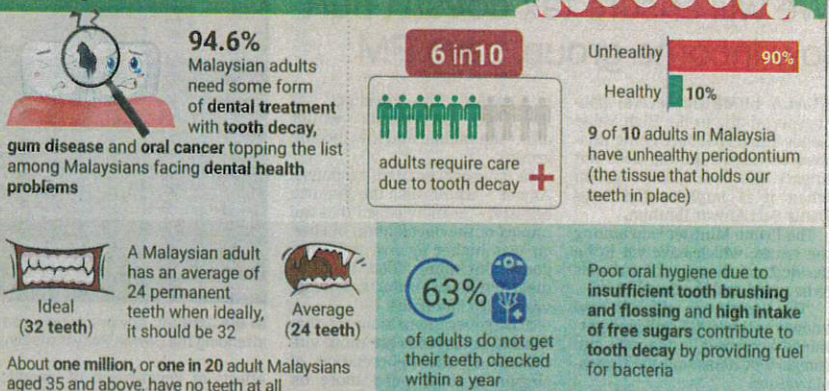
He said he was delighted when she asked him for braces to fix her teeth.

"Some of her teeth overlap, especially in the front, so she was a little self-conscious about it, said Mohammad, who took his 15-year-old girl to a private dentist for the process.

He spent about RM5,000 for the braces and consultation.

University student Ilman Firdaus, 20, who underwent root

Malaysians' oral health status



Smoking and tobacco use are big risk factors for gum disease



Teens and oral health awareness



Source: Adolescent Health Survey 2022, Adolescent Health Survey 2022, The National Oral Health Survey of Adults 2022

TheStargraphics

canal work recently, said he regretted not taking care of his teeth earlier on.

"I continued snacking and drinking sugary drinks.

"The root canal treatment was an eye opener.

"It was very painful and I never

want to experience that again," he said, adding that he brushes and flosses regularly now.

Checks on the Health Ministry website showed that a tooth extraction procedure would only cost RM1 for outpatients at government clinics while private clin-

ics charge between RM80 and RM120.

While private clinics may charge between RM700 and RM1200 for surgical removal, government clinics only charge between RM15 and RM50 for such a procedure.

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 7
RUANGAN : NATION

Say cheese? More teens frowning over teeth appearance

By YUEN MEIKENG
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PETALING JAYA: Refusing to smile and skipping class – these are just some examples of how poor dental health has affected teens in Malaysia.

A survey found that fewer adolescents were brushing their teeth twice a day – from 87.1% in 2017 to 82.2% in 2022.

One in 10 teens (10.8%) also skipped class or online learning in 2022 due to toothaches, an increase of 6.4% from 2012.

And a higher number are choosing not to smile or laugh due to the appearance of their teeth, according to the Adolescent Health Survey 2022.

This happens in one in three cases, or 31% as of 2022 – a jump from 13.3% in 2012.

The survey was conducted by the Health Ministry among 36,000 students aged 13 to 17 from sec-

ondary schools nationwide.

The findings also revealed that fewer teens visited their dentists within a year.

However, the usage of dental floss among these young Malaysians went up from 19.3% in 2017 to 21.4% in 2022.

When contacted, the ministry said the high rate of teens who avoid smiling due to their tooth appearance was concerning.

This is because it could affect their mental wellbeing as they transition into adults.

“In the age of social media, adolescents may perceive social acceptance as a paramount factor.

“Individuals who perceive their smile and dental alignment as less appealing may grapple with low self-esteem, leading to negative effects on their mental health,” the ministry said.

However, it was common for adolescents to seek orthodontic treatment like braces.

According to the survey, teens from Putrajaya, Selangor and Labuan smiled the least due to the condition of their teeth compared with other states.

Meanwhile, Kuala Lumpur had the lowest percentage of teens who brushed their teeth twice a day.

Only 78.9% of adolescents in the Federal Territory had the habit of brushing twice daily.

On possible reasons for fewer teens brushing twice a day, the ministry said it could be due to interruptions in school dental services during the Covid-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2022.

“It might have increased the likelihood of students losing healthy habits they had cultivated during the school year, especially during holidays,” it said.

Malaysian Dental Association president Associate Professor Dr Mas Suryalis Ahmad said the pandemic played a part in the decline.

She said programmes to educate the community, like tooth brushing drills and oral health talks, were halted for over a year.

“Studies have also shown that there was a decline in visits to the dentist, with most patients only seeking help for emergencies or symptomatic treatment.”

Moving forward, the Health Ministry is aiming to raise more awareness about good oral health, highlighting its connection with overall physical well-being.

Such a goal is in line with its theme for World Oral Health Day this year, “Healthy Mouth, Healthy Body.”

“This effort includes collaborations with various agencies, like religious institutions, to promote oral health at mosques, temples and others.

“The ministry will also encourage effective daily toothbrushing in nurseries, kindergartens and preschools to instil good oral

hygiene habits from an early age,” it said.

To ensure access to oral health screenings at least once a year, the ministry carries out community outreach programmes.

“This is through the use of mobile dental clinics or teams, with priority given to underserved populations, persons with disabilities, elderly individuals in institutions, and school students,” the ministry said.

Dr Mas Suryalis said it would be timely for campaigns to be held to promote a better understanding of the relationship between oral and general health.

“At an individual level, one must instil self-awareness about oral health care and undertake self-care initiatives,” she said.

“These efforts include doing a self-examination of one’s own oral cavity to detect ‘suspicious’ lesions, avoiding smoking, and adopting healthy habits like exercising.”

AKHBAR : THE SUN
MUKA SURAT : 3
RUANGAN : NATIONAL

Shocking concern over postpartum depression

➤ Mental issue may lead to extreme, tragic outcomes if left untreated, says psychologist

■ BY SIVANISVARRY MORHAN
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PETALING JAYA: When an 18-month-old toddler was killed after having his throat slit, allegedly by his 32-year-old mother in Johor on March 17, it sent shockwaves among those dealing with postpartum depression (PPD).

This was especially so after Johor police chief Comm M. Kumar revealed preliminary investigations showed the mother had also sent a photo of the child covered in blood to her husband via WhatsApp.

While police are investigating the alleged assailant under Section 302 of the Penal Code for murder, clinical psychologist Dr Ainal Azreen Johari said the authorities should also consider PPD as a possible cause for the mother's actions.

She added that PPD is a prevalent, yet often misunderstood condition affecting new mothers and remains inadequately addressed in Malaysia.

"PPD involves the mental health challenges faced by some new mothers who suffer anxiety and are unable to cope with newfound motherhood.

"While we are sure the police will thoroughly probe the matter, it is also crucial to consider all aspects, including PPD as a possible cause."

Ainal Azreen said if left untreated, PPD can lead to extreme and tragic outcomes such as what happened in the Johor case and stressed the need for greater awareness and support for new mothers.

A specialist in maternal mental health, she said PPD is not just "baby blues" that will dissipate over time.

It is a serious mental health issue that can have lasting effects on the mother and her child if left unaddressed.

Rubithra Paramesivan, 29, who is a mother to a seven-month-old baby girl, said she used to love spending time with her newborn.

"But now it's like a chore. I feel guilty for not feeling the overwhelming joy that everyone says I should have. Some days, I just want to lock myself in a room and cry.

"I can't seem to shake this feeling of emptiness no matter how much love and support I receive from my family. It feels like I am trapped in my mind and unable to escape."

Her husband, structural engineer Kabilash Sundaram, 31, said: "My wife has been more withdrawn of late, but we all thought it was the anxiety of being a new mother.

"We believed we were being supportive by offering to take care of the baby so she

could get some rest. We also took her out for some hair therapy and massage sessions so she could relax.

"But one day I saw her almost losing her temper while feeding our baby who was just four months old then."

Ainal Azreen said PPD presents a significant public health concern, impacting anywhere from 4% to 63.9% of new mothers.

She said it is closely linked to hormonal fluctuations, particularly reductions in oestrogen and progesterone, as well as epigenetic and neuroendocrine alterations that contribute to neuroinflammation.

Diagnosing PPD involves assessing the presence of at least five out of nine specific symptoms that persist for a minimum of two weeks.

"The symptoms encompass feelings of depression, loss of interest, fatigue, sleep disturbances, difficulty concentrating, indecisiveness, changes in appetite or weight, lethargy, suicidal thoughts or attempts, and feelings of worthlessness or guilt," she said.

To overcome this, she emphasised incorporating discussions about maternal mental health into prenatal classes, parenting workshops and school curricula to reduce its stigma.

"We need to foster open and supportive conversations about postpartum depression within our communities.

"Efforts to raise awareness should extend beyond healthcare settings to reach a wider audience, including expecting parents, families, educators, and community leaders."

Officers given the nod to enforce smoking ban

KUALA LUMPUR: The Health Ministry has authorised 189 enforcement officers such as auxiliary police, local authorities and other agencies under Section 3 of the Food Act 1983 (Act 281) to ensure public compliance with the ban on smoking in prohibited places.

Its deputy minister Lukanisman Amang Sauni said this process will continue under the Smoking Products Control Act for Public Health 2024 (Act 852) besides community empowerment through the involvement of NGOs, professional bodies and others.

"Until now there are 189 enforcement officers and auxiliary police, namely 95 enforcers from Kuala Lumpur City Hall, 77 auxiliary police from Sunway Group and 17 auxiliary police from Universiti Teknologi Mara Sungai Buloh, that have been delegated to ensure public compliance," he said at a question-and-answer session at Dewan Negara yesterday.

He was replying to Senator Dr Noraini Idris' supplementary question on enforcement collaboration by the ministry with related parties to curb smoking in public places.

Lukanisman said the creation of a special space outside the restaurant area, which is a place gazetted as a no-smoking area, must obtain the permission of the local authority.

He said the Housing and Local Government Ministry on Jan 20, 2020 issued a circular that if any party wants to set up a smoking area, it must be built according to the conditions set and must obtain the permission from authorities.

"The main purpose is to ensure that only basic facilities such as cigarette ashtrays are provided to prevent smokers from staying in those places for a long time," he said.

— Bernama



The provision of smoking areas is to ensure compliance while also ensuring cleanliness of public places. — MASRY CHE ANI/THE SUN

AKHBAR : THE SUN
MUKA SURAT : 4
RUANGAN : NATIONAL

Oral health hazard of using uncertified braces

■ BY NUQMAN ADAM
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PETALING JAYA: Of late, advertisements promoting uncertified braces being installed for as little as RM90 have been circulating on Facebook and Instagram.

Orthodontists have warned the public that they put their oral health at risk if they installed such braces.

International Islamic University Malaysia orthodontics department head, assistant professor Dr Siti Hajjar Nasir said there were two types of braces advertised.

"One glued to the teeth of the patient and another removable. Both types pose a serious oral health risk as the low-quality materials used are hazardous.

"In addition to mouth infection risks, brackets and wires used to hold the braces can irritate gums and oral tissues, allowing germs to develop."

She said while uncertified and genuine braces were both made

» Cheap versions installed by unlicensed orthodontists expose wearers to infections, diseases and loss of teeth

of alloys, the difference was in the quality and the individual installing the braces, adding that another danger was that teeth may move incorrectly and render the risk of the wearer losing their teeth.

She stressed the primary concern was the risk of cross-infection caused by the use of unsterilised equipment in unsanitary conditions during the installation process.

"Unlicensed dental practitioners often neglect to sterilise uncertified braces before installation due to the high cost of sterilisation equipment.

"Consequently, illegal dental practitioners use non-sterile tools on patients, (exposing them to risk of disease and infections."

Islamic Dental Association of

Malaysia former deputy president Dr Abu Razali Saini said registered dental clinics will advise patients wearing braces on proper teeth cleaning techniques.

"We also provide a schedule for regular appointments to monitor their dental condition. However, individuals wearing uncertified braces do not have the benefit of regular monitoring. Food particles trapped in braces for extended periods could lead to cavities and gum problems," he said, adding that going to a licensed orthodontist to install braces was safer.

Abu Razali urged individuals who use uncertified dental braces to undergo health checks as a preventive measure against serious

complications.

"This is essential to mitigate any issues at an early stage so remedial action could be taken."

Universiti Teknologi Mara lecturer and special orthodontist Dr Nik Mukhriz Nik Mustapha said there is a demand for uncertified braces because it is cheap.

"Wearing braces has evolved into a fashion statement, with some regarding it as a status symbol accessible only to the rich as it costs from RM6,000 to RM7,000 at registered dental clinics."

He said orthodontists would never use uncertified braces due to the dangers and risks involved, and the risk of their clinics being reported to authorities. He advised the public to verify the licensing status of a dental surgeon via the Dental Practitioners Information Management System webpage, adding that through collective action and sustained advocacy can the public make informed decisions and access proper oral care.