

Risk of hantavirus still low but vigilance is key: Specialist

➤ Current concerns tied mainly to imported exposure rather than community spread

BY FAIZ RUZMAN

newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: Malaysians exposed to hantavirus overseas may unknowingly carry the infection for weeks before symptoms appear, prompting health experts to warn that missed travel history could allow imported cases to slip through despite no local infections being reported so far.

Malaysia's immediate risk remains low but vigilance is critical as the main threat involves travellers arriving from affected regions, said Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Medical Centre infectious disease specialist Assoc Prof Dr Petrick @ Ramesh K. Periyasamy.

"The primary clinical concern is imported cases via travellers arriving from high-risk regions," he noted.

He said doctors could miss suspected cases if assessments focused only on visible symptoms without probing recent travel, contact with rodent-contaminated environments or cruise exposure.

"The incubation period is typically between one and seven weeks, with a median of between 14 and 17 days."

He also said while hantaviruses are traditionally spread through exposure to aerosolised rodent urine, droppings or saliva, the strain linked to the recent international cluster warrants greater concern because of its rare ability to spread between humans.

Petrick said the virus attacks the lining of blood vessels, potentially triggering fluid leakage that could lead to severe lung or kidney complications in critical cases.

Nevertheless, he stressed that the risk of local transmission remains controlled as current concerns are tied mainly to imported exposure rather than community spread.

Meanwhile, university public health expert and School of Liberal Studies dean Prof Dr

Sharifa Ezat Wan Puteh said the alert should serve as a reminder not to take rodent exposure lightly, particularly in unhygienic environments.

She said although hantavirus infections are rare, contact with rat droppings, urine, saliva, bites or carcasses could expose people to diseases already endemic in Malaysia.

"The probability of getting leptospirosis is higher compared with hantavirus infection."

She said prevention efforts should begin at home, workplaces, food storage areas and rubbish disposal sites, where poor sanitation could encourage rodent infestations.

"Clean your home, living area and workplace so that there is no opportunity for rats to breed."

"Prevent rat breeding areas, such as rubbish piles, food areas and storage places, especially in residential areas or workplaces."

She also warned against dry sweeping rat droppings, saying contaminated particles could become airborne and inhaled.

"Wear a mask, goggles and gloves when cleaning rat droppings, urine, carcasses or saliva."

"If there is contact, quickly wash your hands or the exposed area with soap and water. Do not rub your eyes or mouth."

"Clean rat droppings by applying bleach for between five and 10 minutes before removing them."

On concerns involving pets, Sharifa said cats do not transmit hantavirus to humans, although rodent carcasses brought indoors should be handled cautiously.

"Cats do not transmit hantavirus to humans. What people need to be careful about is if rat carcasses are brought into the house."

Global concern over hantavirus intensified after the World Health Organisation was notified on May 2 of a severe respiratory illness cluster aboard the *MV Hondius* cruise ship.

By May 8, eight cases had been reported, including six confirmed infections, two probable cases and three deaths.

The vessel carried 147 passengers and crew while 34 passengers had already disembarked, triggering international contact tracing efforts.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said on Sunday Malaysia remains on full alert despite recording no hantavirus cases involving Malaysians.

HANTAVIRUS
What you need to know

What is hantavirus?
A rodent-borne virus that can infect humans through air contaminated with rat urine, droppings or saliva.

Symptoms: Early signs may include fever, body aches, headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea or abdominal pain.

Source: World Health Organisation, Hantavirus factsheet (May 6, 2026)

Why the sudden alert?
On May 2, WHO was notified of a severe respiratory illness cluster on the *MV Hondius* cruise ship.

The ship had **147 passengers** and crew onboard. Of these, 34 had already disembarked, triggering international contact tracing.

The illness was confirmed as hantavirus infection through laboratory testing conducted in South Africa. Further tests confirmed the virus as **Andes virus** on May 6.

As of 8 May, a total of eight cases (six confirmed and two probable cases), including three deaths.

Malaysia on alert, but no local cases reported:
Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad (May 10)

"22,367 ships and boats have been inspected at Malaysian entry points to ensure public health and sanitation compliance."

"Travellers remain the main concern"
— Assoc. Prof Dr Petrick @ Ramesh K. Periyasamy, UKM Medical Centre infectious disease specialist

Petrick said the main concern for Malaysia is of **travellers who may have been exposed in high-risk regions**, although local spread remains unlikely.

"The incubation period is typically one to seven weeks, with a median of 14 to 17 days,"
Petrick told theSun

"Do not sweep rat droppings dry"
— Prof Dr Sharifa Ezat Wan Puteh, Dean, School of Liberal Studies (ICRS-LAM)

Sharifa advised: **do not clean rat droppings dry**, as hantavirus can spread when air contaminated by rat waste is inhaled.

Disinfect rat droppings with bleach for five to 10 minutes before clearing them.

"Cats kill rats, but they do not transmit hantavirus to humans. The concern is when rat carcasses are brought indoors,"
Sharifa told theSun.

AS Malaysia moves towards becoming an ageing nation by 2030, concerns over osteoporosis disease are growing, but so are misconceptions about what truly keeps bones strong.

For decades, public health messaging and dietary advice have closely linked bone health with calcium intake. Milk, supplements and calcium-rich foods have long been promoted as the foundation of strong bones. As a result, many people have come to believe calcium alone is sufficient.

However, health experts caution that this perception may create a false sense of security as bone strength is influenced by a combination of biological, nutritional and lifestyle factors beyond calcium alone.

"Many assume calcium alone is sufficient, when in fact bone health is far more complex than that," said physiology expert Associate Prof Dr Badariah Ahmad.

Misconceptions about calcium

In clinical practice, misconceptions about calcium intake are often reflected in patient behaviour, particularly the over-reliance on supplements without proper assessment of dietary needs.

Badariah, who is also deputy head of the School of Medicine and Health Sciences (Engagement & Partnerships Unit) at Monash University Malaysia, told Bernama that many people tend to self-supplement without understanding whether it is necessary.

In terms of calcium supplementation, she said this often occurs without evaluating calcium intake from daily food sources, particularly among those who perceive supplements as a preventive measure even in the absence of deficiency.

Excessive calcium intake,

Rethinking bone health

➤ Osteoporosis threatens overall wellbeing of Malaysian seniors

especially from supplements, does not necessarily improve bone strength and may instead increase risks such as kidney stones and gastrointestinal discomfort, including constipation.

According to Badariah, the safest approach is to meet the recommended daily calcium intake (approximately 1,000 to 1,200mg depending on age and sex), primarily through food, with supplements used only when medically indicated.

Commenting on calcium intake through food, she said many Malaysians tend to focus on milk while overlooking other calcium-rich sources such as small fish with edible bones (dried anchovies), as well as tofu, leafy green vegetables, nuts and fortified soy products.

She also cautioned high intake of salt and heavily processed foods may increase calcium loss through urine, gradually weakening bone strength over time.

Dr Win Min Thein, an associate professor of orthopaedics at the School of Medicine in the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences at Taylor's University, concurred bone health is shaped not by calcium supplementation alone but by a combination of hormonal, nutritional and lifestyle factors.

"(For example) osteoporosis (a common bone disease) involves both loss of bone mass and deterioration of bone structure, not just low calcium levels," he said.

He said even individuals with adequate calcium intake may still

experience bone loss if other factors are not addressed, including hormonal changes, nutritional deficiencies and sedentary lifestyles.

He added that smoking and excessive alcohol consumption further weaken bone strength by disrupting bone formation and increasing fracture risk. He also stressed the importance of maintaining adequate levels of physical activity, saying bones require mechanical stress to maintain strength and structural integrity.

"Without sufficient mechanical stimulation, bones gradually lose their ability to remain strong," he said on the matter.

Bone is not just calcium

Dr Win added bone is a living tissue that continuously undergoes remodelling - a dynamic process in which specialised cells regulate the balance between bone formation (osteoblasts) and breakdown (osteoclasts), enabling the skeleton to repair microdamage and adapt to mechanical stress.

This continuous process ensures structural integrity but when the balance is disrupted, bone quality gradually deteriorates over time, often without early symptoms.

To illustrate this, Win likened bone to a constructed structure.

"Calcium acts as the cement, collagen forms the framework and bone cells are the workers maintaining the structure," he said.

In this context, calcium represents only one component of a

broader biological system, rather than the sole determinant of bone strength.

"Bone strength depends not only on mineral content but also on the integrity of its collagen framework, which provides structural support.

"Hence, without a strong underlying structure, increasing calcium intake alone offers limited benefit and may create a false sense of security among individuals who rely heavily on supplements," he added.

Elaborating on bone health across one's lifespan, Badariah explained childhood and adolescence represent a critical phase for building peak bone mass, which determines long-term bone strength and resilience.

However, modern lifestyles characterised by reduced physical activity and limited sunlight exposure can negatively affect this development, even in a tropical country such as Malaysia.

Another concern is that in adulthood, bone loss can occur gradually without noticeable symptoms, often leading to delayed diagnosis when fractures eventually occur.

"Many patients only begin to pay attention to bone health after complications arise," she said, adding that by then, significant damage has already taken place.

Importance of screening

Screening tools such as bone density scans can help identify at-risk individuals earlier,

particularly those with factors such as low body weight, smoking, a sedentary lifestyle or long-term medication use.

"For menopausal women, reduced oestrogen levels accelerate bone loss, increasing the risk of osteoporosis within a relatively short period.

"For older adults, fractures, particularly hip fractures, can result in long-term disability, reduced independence and higher mortality risk," she added.

She stressed preventive measures must begin early, and these include maintaining an active lifestyle, performing weight-bearing exercises regularly - and walking and climbing stairs to support overall bone health and reduce long-term risk.

Win also underscored the importance of establishing healthy lifestyle habits early in life to support long-term bone strength.

Badariah said from a clinical perspective, healthcare providers should place greater emphasis on lifestyle assessments during consultations with patients, including assessing their physical activity, habits such as smoking and alcohol consumption - and fall risk.

"Exercise should be prescribed just like medication, with clear and practical guidance, while patients also need to understand supplements work best when combined with (physical) movement, proper nutrition and healthy habits," she said.

She said lifestyle changes are often overlooked by patients and their caretakers because their benefits are gradual and less visible compared with medication.

"We can help people take a more holistic approach to bone health rather than relying too heavily on supplements alone," she added.

NUMed reaffirms commitment to MBBS students

► University assures swift and coordinated action following royal assent for new UK legislation.

NEWCASTLE University Medicine Malaysia (NUMed) has reaffirmed its commitment to supporting its Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) students in light of the UK's Medical Training (Prioritisation) Act 2026, which received royal assent earlier this year.

Under the new framework, NUMed graduates are placed on a reserve list for UK Foundation Programme allocation. While this represents a change in prioritisation, graduates remain eligible for allocation to a training post. In the 2026 UKFP cycle, 103 NUMed graduates applied; all were placed on the reserve list despite holding a UK qualification accredited by the General Medical Council (GMC) and meeting all academic and regulatory standards.

In a statement NUMed said it recognises that this change is deeply unsettling for students, particularly those who had planned to pursue careers in the UK. The university has consistently stated that access to UK postgraduate training is not guaranteed, and published information for applicants has always included the disclaimer: "This option may change before you graduate and cannot be guaranteed."

The university added that it acknowledges that the progression of many graduates into the UK Foundation Programme in recent years has understandably shaped student expectations.

Recognising the concerns among students, particularly those intending to pursue medical careers in the UK, NUMed has taken swift and coordinated action to ensure clarity, advocacy and continued access to opportunities.

The university has established regular communication with students and their families through town halls, detailed email briefings, and individual academic mentoring. The vice-chancellor held a town hall with all MBBS students in March. A dedicated Careers Day will be held on May 8, featuring speakers on the US Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE), Australian medical licensing, career opportunities in the pharmaceutical sector, the Malaysian Armed Forces Medical Corps and other pathways. Additional wellbeing support has also been introduced in response to heightened anxiety among the student community.

"NUMed is actively supporting students to explore all available options, including alternative pathways to GMC registration, as well as providing information on international medical careers and dedicated careers events," said Prof Dennis Wong, regional provost and group CEO (East and Southeast Asia).

The university has been engaging with the British High Commission in Malaysia, the British Council, the UK Department for Business and Trade and the Medical Schools Council since January 2026. Newcastle is collaborating with other affected transnational education institutions to present a coordinated position and has engaged directly with UK MPs, members of the House of Lords and relevant government officials.

The university also welcomes the Malaysian Ministry of Health's statement expressing its readiness to support affected students.

According to Prof Quentin Anstee, provost and vice-chancellor of the Faculty of Medical

Sciences, Newcastle University, "NUMed was initially established to deliver globally recognised medical education that responds to the evolving needs of Malaysia's healthcare system, and continues to attract talented students from across the world who recognise Malaysia as a leading destination for high-quality clinical training and healthcare innovation. This development reflects continued confidence in the quality and international standing of our programme and marks an important step towards ensuring our graduates have access to clinical training pathways that support both Malaysia's healthcare priorities and internationally recognised professional progression."

Wong emphasised: "Our priority is, and always will be, our students. We understand the uncertainty this development creates, and we are fully mobilised to support every student through it. We are engaging at the highest levels, working collaboratively across institutions, and exploring every viable pathway to safeguard their futures."

The university emphasised that its academic standards, accreditation and commitment to producing highly competent, globally recognised medical graduates remain unchanged.

"NUMed's MBBS is identical to the degree awarded by our UK counterpart and remains a GMC-accredited Primary Medical Qualification. Eligibility to apply for the UK Foundation Programme is unchanged, and graduates of overseas campuses of UK medical schools, including NUMed, are not excluded from applying," Wong added.

NUMed remains resolute in taking every necessary step to protect students' progression and future careers. The university remains confident in the strength of its programmes and the calibre of its graduates and will continue engaging closely with stakeholders while providing timely updates.

COMMUNITY spirit was on display at the National Cancer Society Malaysia (NCSM)-Biocon Relay for Life 2026 which saw the participation of survivors, caregivers, healthcare professionals, students and the public.

The cancer awareness and advocacy campaign was organised by NCSM and Biocon Malaysia, and supported by Newcastle University Medicine Malaysia (NUMed) in Iskandar Puteri, Johor, as venue host.

The event included a community run, cancer screenings and games promoting a healthy lifestyle, early detection and collective action against cancer.

NUMed lecturer and organiser Ainul Huda Abdul Razak expressed pride in the university's involvement, saying, "Being a Relay For Life venue partner reflects our commitment to community engagement and health advocacy."

The event translated academic work into tangible societal impact with meaningful benefits for society and the wider Asian region, according to a NUMed press statement.

Emphasising the educational value of the Relay for Life event, Ainul Farhana said it provided students and staff the opportunity to better understand real-world health challenges while fostering empathy, professionalism and collaboration, enriching the overall educational experience.

"The event aligns closely with our mission to produce excellent doctors and graduates who are compassionate, skilled and socially accountable.

"By hosting and engaging in community health programmes, we deliver high-quality learning experiences that extend beyond the classroom while addressing

Uniting community for cancer awareness



Participants setting off on the Relay for Life run organised for cancer awareness and advocacy at the campus in Johor. — Handout

the needs of our students and the health landscape," she added.

NUMed academic affairs acting dean Dr Vivian Andaya Verbo, who launched the community run, stressed the importance of cancer awareness and early detection.

From NUMed's perspective, she said, raising awareness about cancer screening is essential, as early detection significantly improves patient outcomes, allows for

less invasive treatments and reduces the burden on the healthcare system.

She said community outreach initiatives helped reduce health inequalities and supported NUMed's emphasis on preventive care.

"Encouraging screening empowers patients to take a proactive role in their health rather than relying solely on reactive treatment."

She also said that cancer screening

programmes relied on multidisciplinary collaboration involving doctors, nurses, public health practitioners and community workers, which was actively promoted through NUMed's interprofessional education model.

"Such initiatives help students develop communication skills, cultural sensitivity and a deeper understanding of population health challenges in Malaysia," added Dr Vivian.

Hantavirus tidak mudah merebak seperti Covid-19

Tiada keperluan aktifkan pencegahan khas

Oleh TUAN BUQHAIRAH TUAN MUHAMAD ADNAN

PUTRAJAYA - Langkah pencegahan khas tidak perlu diaktifkan di dalam negara susulan kebimbangan terhadap penularan Hantavirus kerana risiko jangkitan ketika ini masih terkawal dan tidak mudah merebak seperti Covid-19.

Pakar virologi, Professor Dr Szaly Abu Bakar berkata, langkah pencegahan buat masa ini hanya melibatkan individu yang mempunyai pendedahan langsung kepada mereka yang dikenal pasti berada dalam kapal MV Hondius bersama pesakit dijangkiti atau individu bergejala yang mempunyai kaitan dengan kapal itu.

"Tiada keperluan bagi mereka yang lain termasuk masyarakat umum mengambil langkah pencegahan bagi jangkit-



SAZALY

an ini," katanya pada Isnin. Menurutnya, individu yang pulang dari negara endemik bagaimanapun disarankan segera mendapatkan rawatan di hospital sekiranya mengalami gejala seperti jangkitan saluran pernafasan atau selesema.

Katanya, sejarah perjalanan juga perlu dimaklumkan kepada doktor bagi memudahkan proses pengesanan awal jangkitan.

Sebelum ini Kapal MV Hondius yang membawa 150 penumpang dan kru pelbagai negara, berlabuh di Kepulauan Canary pada Ahad selepas wabak Hantavirus terdeteksi.

Operasi pemindahan besar-besaran dilakukan pihak Sepanyol dengan kerjasama Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO).

Setakat ini, sekurang-kurangnya tiga penumpang dilaporkan maut akibat wabak tersebut, yang dikaitkan dengan strain Andes, satu jenis Hantavirus jarang tetapi boleh membawa maut dan berpotensi menular antara manusia

dalam kes tertentu.

Selain Perancis, puluhan penumpang lain turut dipulangkan ke negara masing-masing termasuk Sepanyol, United Kingdom, Amerika Syarikat dan Belanda dengan kebanyakan mereka menjalani kuarantin serta pemantauan kesihatan rapi.

Sementara itu, mengulas tahap bahaya virus itu, Szaly berkata, secara amnya Hantavirus tidak mudah ditular kan seperti virus SARS-CoV-2 yang menyebabkan Covid-19.

Namun jelas beliau, jangkitan itu perlu dikenal pasti lebih awal bagi mengelakkan komplikasi lebih serius kepada pesakit.

"Jangkitan ini amat perlu dikesan awal dan pesakit menerima rawatan segera bagi mengelakkan komplikasi yang boleh menyebabkan gejala jangkitan lebih teruk termasuk kematian," katanya.

Terdahulu, Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Zulkefly Ahmad dilaporkan berkata Malaysia berada dalam keadaan siap siaga menghadapi ancaman Hantavirus termasuk memperkukuh kawalan di pintu masuk negara.

HANTAVIRUS
VIRUS BAWAAN TIKUS YANG BOLEH MENYEBABKAN PENYAKIT SERIUS DAN BERPOTENSI MAUT KEPADA MANUSIA.

ASAL
Virus ini ditemui di pelbagai bahagian dunia, terutamanya di Amerika, Eropah dan Asia.

PUNCA
Melalui sentuhan dengan rodents yang dijangkiti atau melalui air kencing, najis atau air liur.

KESAN
Jangkitan hantavirus boleh menyebabkan pelbagai jenis penyakit, termasuk penyakit yang teruk dan kematian.

SIMPTOM
Demam tinggi dan keletihan melampau
Sakit otot dan sakit kepala
Loya, muntah atau cirit-birit

DALAM KES LEBIH SERIUS, PESAKIT BOLEH MENGALAMI:
Radang paru-paru teruk
Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS)
Tekanan darah rendah dan kegagalan organ

Pada 7 Mei 2026, WHO mengeluarkan amaran bahawa lebih banyak kes hantavirus berkemungkinan dikesan selagi tiga penumpang sebuah kapal perikanan, MV Hondius, disahkan mengidap dunia akibat jangkitan tersebut.

Sumber: World Health Organization (WHO) dan laporan media

Kawal pintu masuk bendung penularan Hantavirus



DANIEL

GEORGE TOWN - Kerajaan negeri memberi jaminan semua pintu masuk antarabangsa termasuk lapangan terbang dan pelabuhan berada dalam keadaan siap siaga serta dikawal rapi susulan kebimbangan penularan Hantavirus.

Walaupun risiko jangkitan di negara ini disifatkan masih rendah, namun menurut Exco Belia, Sukan dan Kesihatan negeri, Daniel Gooi Zi Sen, langkah itu selaras tindakan Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM).

Ujarnya, KKM memperketat saringan kesihatan di semua pintu masuk negara termasuk di Pulau Pinang, selain meningkatkan kapasiti makmal bagi pengesanan awal jangkitan.

"Setakat ini, KKM memaklumkan situasi penularan lebih tertumpu di beberapa negara Eropah, namun Malaysia masih berada pada tahap risiko rendah.

"Bagaimanapun, kita mengambil langkah awal termasuk memperketat kawalan di pintu masuk antarabangsa serta memperkukuh keupayaan makmal untuk mengesan sebarang kemungkinan kes," katanya ketika sidang akhbar di Bangunan DUN Pulau Pinang di sini pada Isnin.

Katanya, setiap pintu masuk utama ada pegawai kesihatan dan sebahagian prosedur operasi standard bagi mengelakkan penularan penyakit berjangkit.

Mengulas lanjut, Daniel berkata, setiap pintu masuk antarabangsa turut mempunyai pegawai kesihatan bertugas dan menjalankan pemeriksaan kesihatan awam terhadap ketibaan penumpang serta kru kapal.

"Protokol ini memang lama wujud, bukan baharu. Antaranya termasuk penggunaan kamera pengesan suhu bagi mengenal pasti simptom demam atau jangkitan awal," katanya.

Tambahnya, berdasarkan data KKM, bermula 1 Januari hingga 2 Mei tahun ini, sebanyak 22,367 kapal dan bot diperiksa di pintu masuk antarabangsa seluruh negara.

"Dalam tempoh sama, 2,421 sijil praktikal dan 1,146 Sijil Sanitasi Kapal (SSC) dikeluarkan bagi memastikan pematuhan terhadap keperluan kesihatan awam, sanitasi serta kawalan infestasi.

"Setakat ini tiada kes Hantavirus dikesan di Malaysia dan situasi masih terkawal, walaupun beberapa negara lain dilaporkan mempunyai kes. Kita tidak perlu panik, tetapi langkah berjaga-jaga tetap diteruskan," katanya.

Pesakit warga asing melonjak 26 peratus

GEORGE TOWN - Jumlah pesakit warga asing mendapatkan rawatan di 16 hospital swasta di negeri ini meningkat 527,176 orang tahun lalu.

Jumlah itu sekali gus mencatatkan peningkatan 26 peratus berbanding 418,608 pesakit pada tahun sebelumnya.

Exco Pelancongan dan Ekonomi Kreatif negeri, Wong Hon Wai berkata, peningkatan itu menyaksikan janaan pendapatan melonjak hampir 27 peratus kepada RM1.136 bilion berbanding RM898.07 juta pada 2024.

Menurutnya, data Penang Centre of Medical Tourism (PMED) membuktikan Pulau Pinang terus menjadi antara destinasi utama pelancongan perubatan di rantau ini.

"Sempena Malaysia Year of Medical Tourism (MYMT) 2026, pelbagai langkah strategik sedang dilaksanakan bagi memperkukuh sektor ini," katanya ketika menjawab soalan lisan **Oh Ah Teong (DAP-Batu Lanchang)** mengenai pencapaian negeri dalam sektor pelancongan perubatan.

Dalam pada itu, katanya, antara inisiatif diperkenalkan termasuk kerjasama dengan syarikat penerbangan tambang rendah, AirAsia menerusi program *Boarding Pass Privileges*.

Terlalu FOMO makanan manis, kurang zat hingga lupa bersenam

KUALA LUMPUR - Terlalu *fear of missing out* atau FOMO menikmati makanan manis, kurang zat dan tidak sihat demi mengikuti trend antara salah satu kebimbangan serius mesti ditangani segera.

Guru sekolah, Kartika Abd Kahar, 30, berkata, dia tidak menafikan terdapat segelintir masyarakat terlalu mengikuti saranan juadah makanan di media sosial tanpa menghiraukan tahap kesihatan masing-masing hingga membawa kepada peningkatan peratusan masalah berat badan secara berlebihan.

Menurut Kartika, lebih buruk apabila ditambah pula sesetengah masyarakat jarang bersenam untuk membakar kalori selepas makan.

Selaku guru mata pelajaran Sains, Kartika berkata, tiada masalah jika seseorang itu ingin menikmati makanan tular di pasaran, namun perlu berpeda-pada dalam konteks pengambilannya.

"Saya sangat setuju masyarakat sekarang FOMO dengan makanan viral, saya tak terkecuali tapi kenalah berpeda-pada.

"Lebih-lebih lagi, saya yang mengajar di sekolah. Pelajar mudah terdedah dengan pelbagai makanan tak sihat hanya me-

lalui media sosial.

"Saya rasa sebagai masyarakat, kita semua perlu bijak membuat keputusan tentang makanan macam mana yang baik untuk kesihatan diri. Kalau dah makan banyak, mesti bersenam selepas itu supaya tidak obesiti dan tidak berisiko meninggal dunia pada usia muda," katanya kepada *Sinar Harian* pada Isnin.

Sementara itu, guru Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan (SMK) Bandar Baru Sentul, P Renukha Devi, 26, mengakui pada zaman dahulu obesiti hanya berlaku terhadap warga emas tetapi kenyataan itu tidak relevan untuk generasi sekarang apabila golongan muda juga tidak terkecuali berdepan isu tersebut.

Tambahnya, makanan segera semakin mendapat permintaan jika dibandingkan dengan makanan bernutrien tinggi.

Justeru, Renukha menyarankan supaya sistem piramid makanan yang selama ini menjadi rujukan kesihatan ditumpukan kepada melebihi protein berbanding karbohidrat, khususnya buat remaja dan kanak-kanak.

"Protein sangat penting dan karbohidrat pula kalau makan banyak tapi tak bersenam akan bertukar kepada lemak hinggalah kita jadi obesiti.

"Ibu bapa dan guru hendaklah memainkan peranan membimbing anak-anak muda,



KARTIKA



RENUKHA



MUHAMMAD
AIMAN

ajar bersenam dan didik cara pemakanan seimbang," jelasnya.

Juruvideo, Muhammad Aiman Irfan Zaidi, 24, tidak menafikan punca utama masalah berat badan berlebihan antaranya kurang bersenam dan gaya hidup yang terlalu sibuk sehinggakan tiada masa menjalani aktiviti riadah, ditambah pula pemakanan harian tidak seimbang.

Baginya, ia menimbulkan kebimbangan serius dalam jangka panjang memandangkan penyakit seperti diabetes, darah tinggi bahkan serangan jantung lazimnya terjadi tanpa disedari.

"Saya rasa kesedaran mengenai gaya hidup sihat perlu diperkasa sejak muda lagi.

"Antaranya menjadikan satu peringatan bahawa penyakit boleh datang tanpa disedari pun," katanya.

Ujarnya, mulakan senaman dengan langkah kecil sudah memadai selain kurangkan makan sederhana dan bersenam sekurang-kurangnya 30 minit sehari.

"Masyarakat termasuk saya perlu ada kesedaran jaga kesihatan diri daripada awal," jelasnya.



Laporan *Sinar Harian* pada Isnin.