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OZONE THERAPY LACKS MEDICAL PROOF

Health Ministry studies conclude that it is not effective in treating medical conditions

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THE use of ozone therapy as a treatment option for health conditions lacks sufficient safety and therapeutic advantage over available conventional therapeutic modalities.

The finding was based on data from a health technology assessment

(HTA) on ozone therapy by the ministry's Health Technology Assessment Section (MaHTAS).

According to a Health Ministry blog posting by Director General of Health Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, MaHTAS had conducted and published two HTAs on ozone therapy in 2005 and 2011.

"There were few low-level evidence retrieved on its efficacy or effectiveness in the treatment of certain medical conditions.

"However, these evidence were limited to certain medical problems, such as back pain and were not sufficient to conclude that the therapy is

effective in treating other medical conditions, such as human immunodeficiency virus infections and cancer," Dr Noor Hisham said.

He said although ozone therapy was claimed to be minimally invasive and complications related to this treatment are rare, there are other considerations, which need to be taken into account before deciding it is safe.

The objective of the reviews was to assess the safety and efficacy or effectiveness of ozone

therapy in the treatment of medical conditions using existing evidence.

Databases were searched, which included PubMed, Ovid Medline(R),

EBM Reviews Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials, EBM Reviews Cochrane database of systematic reviews, EBM Reviews - HTA Databases, Horizon Scanning database, FDA website, and Google for published reports, he added.

The report can be downloaded at http://www.moh.gov.my/index.php/database_stores/attach/download/347/161.

The therapy was thrown into the spotlight recently following the *New Straits Times*' Special Probes Team's expose on the danger of harmful beauty products and unsanctioned services offered by beauty parlours.

It brought to the authorities' attention the growing number of beauty parlours offering illicit services, including invasive ones.

Raids were mounted, marking the first phase of the ongoing offensive

against errant parlours, even as enforcers from the Health Ministry's Pharmaceutical Services Division began mapping out a comprehensive plan to nab every single one of them.

There is not one ozone machine run by the mushrooming number of beauty parlours operating which is registered with the ministry.

Deputy Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Hilmi Yahaya was reported as saying that ozone therapy was very dangerous because it used O3 gas and if it entered into the blood stream and formed bubbles, it would travel to a person's brain or heart.

The NST team also spoke to celebrities whose images, seemingly portrayed them as "endorsing" such therapy, had been used by unscrupulous beauty parlours to lure the public.



Datuk Seri Dr Hilmi Yahaya