

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 1
RUANGAN : MUKA HADAPAN



AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 6
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Denda RM25,000, penjara 3 tahun jika jual 'Energy Stick'

Siasatan awal KKM dapati produk bukan keluaran berdaftar

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Kuala Lumpur: Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) memberi amaran penjualan produk penyedut hidung atau 'Energy Stick' di negara ini adalah melanggar Peraturan 7(1)(a), Peraturan-Peraturan Kawalan Dadah dan Kosmetik 1984.

Mereka yang didapati menjual atau membekalkan produk itu boleh dikenakan denda sehingga RM25,000 atau penjara sehingga tiga tahun atau kedua-duanya.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Muhammad Radzi Abu Hassan, berkata siasatan awal kementerian mendapati produk itu bukan keluaran berdaftar.

Jika sabit kesalahan kali kedua dan berikutnya, penjual boleh dikenakan hukuman denda tidak melebihi RM50,000 atau penjara tidak melebihi lima tahun atau kedua-duanya.

Syarikat yang melakukan

kesalahan sama boleh didenda sehingga RM50,000 kesalahan pertama dan sehingga RM100,000 untuk kesalahan berikutnya.

Penjualan dalam talian

Katanya, KKM menerima aduan awam berkaitan penjualan secara dalam talian produk berkenaan yang disyaki tidak berdaftar.

"Hasil siasatan awal mendapati keluaran terbabit bukan keluaran berdaftar.

"Ia perlu berdaftar dengan Pihak Berkuasa Kawalan Dadah (PBKD) seperti peruntukan undang-undang di bawah Akta Jualan Dadah 1952. Justeru, pemantauan dan tindakan penguatkuasaan akan dijalankan ke atas penjual yang dikesan menjual produk berkenaan," katanya.

Dalam satu kenyataan semalam, beliau memaklumkan, hasil saringan awal di platform e-dagang, KKM turut mengesan pengiklanan dan penjualan produk berkenaan oleh penjual tempatan dan luar negara.

"KKM melalui Bahagian Penguatkuasaan Farmasi akan mengambil tindakan penguatkuasaan sewajarnya, iaitu memastikan iklan produk terbabit diturunkan," katanya.

Beliau memasihatkan pengguna agar memastikan produk kesihatan mempunyai pelekat hologram dan Nombor Pendaftaran

Produk (MAL) sebelum membeli produk terbabit.

Status pendaftaran produk boleh disemak di laman <https://www.npra.gov.my> di ruangan Status Produk atau dengan menghubungi terus Pusat Panggilan Farmasi Kebangsaan di talian 1-800-88-6722.

Selain itu, orang ramai boleh memuat turun aplikasi NPRA Product Status daripada Google Play Store bagi tujuan semakan.

"KKM komited dalam melindungi kesihatan dan kesejahteraan orang awam melalui pemantauan secara berterusan.

"Orang ramai turut digalakkan mengemukakan aduan dan menyalurkan maklumat mengenai penjualan produk tidak berdaftar kepada Bahagian Penguatkuasaan Farmasi KKM," kata Muhammad Radzi.

Aduan dan maklumat boleh disalurkan melalui laman <https://www.pharmacy.gov.my> atau portal Sistem Pengurusan Aduan Agensi Awam (SisPAA) di <https://moh.spab.gov.my> atau mana-mana Cawangan Penguatkuasaan Farmasi berdekatan atau talian 03-78413200.

"Aduan dan maklumat ini agar tindakan sewajarnya dapat diambil bagi membanteras penjualan produk seperti ini di pasaran," katanya.

Menteri Pendidikan, Fadhlina Sidek juga sebelum ini meminta pihak sekolah dan ibu bapa memberi perhatian serius terhadap penggunaan atau pengambilan produk berkenaan kerana ia boleh memudaratkan kesihatan pelajar.



Dr Muhammad Radzi

'Produk berbahaya, ancaman kesihatan awam'

Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Ahli Farmasi Malaysia (MPS) menegaskan 'Energy Stick' adalah sejenis produk yang berbahaya dan menjadi ancaman kepada kesihatan awam.

Justeru, pihak berkenaan bimbang dengan penjualan alat seperti vape atau rokok elektronik itu yang kini giat dipasarkan kepada orang dewasa, termasuk pelajar sekolah.

Malah, Presiden MPS, Prof Amrabi Buang, menggesa Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad, mengambil tindakan pantas dan tegas terhadap penjual yang mempromosikan produk berbahaya ini.

"Penetapan harga dan pemasaran produk yang didakwa, dijual pada harga serendah RM2.50 secara dalam talian menimbulkan kebimbangan serius kerana ia mudah diakses individu termasuk kanak-kanak.

"Tambah pula, MPS mengulangi cadangannya agar Dr Dzulkefly mengembalikan status cecair vape yang mengandungi nikotin ke dalam Senarai Racun," katanya dalam satu kenyataan semalam.

Amrabi berkata, langkah proaktif ini sejajar advokasi berterusan MPS untuk larangan produk vape, mengakui potensi risiko kesihatan yang berkaitan

dengan amalan ketagihannya.

"Kerajaan perlu mengutamakan kesejahteraan jangka panjang orang ramai dengan pantas dan menangani serta melarang penjualan mana-mana produk yang memudaratkan akses kepada nikotin.

"Kami terus menyeru untuk memasukkan Generational End Game (GEG) ke dalam Kawalan Akta Produk Merokok untuk Kesihatan Awam 2023 bagi menangani isu berkaitan merokok yang lebih meluas produk," katanya.

Semalam, Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) berkata pihaknya sedang mengenal pasti tindakan serta peraturan yang

akan diambil terhadap penjual produk penyedut hidung (nasal inhaler) atau 'Energy Stick' yang kini giat dijual dan dipromosikan menerusi sosial media, kononnya dapat memberi tenaga dan kesegaran kepada penggunaannya.

Timbalan Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Lukanisman Awang Sauni, berkata pihaknya sudah mengenal pasti perkara itu yang dibangkitkan sejak beberapa hari lalu.

"Ini adalah isu bersama dan kita juga sudah dihubungi oleh Kementerian Pendidikan (KPM) dan Kementerian Pembangunan Wanita, Keluarga dan Masya-

rakat berhubung perkara ini untuk melihat kerjasama yang dapat dilaksanakan dalam mengesan penggunaan produk berkenaan daripada berleluasa.

"Kita akan melihat apakah bentuk tindakan dan peraturan yang kita boleh ambil untuk mengelakkan 'Energy Stick' ini daripada terus dijual di pasaran kerana ia menyerupai 'vape' dan boleh memudaratkan kesihatan terutama kanak-kanak.

"Perkara ini masih baharu dan kita tiada data penggunaan produk ini dalam kalangan kanak-kanak, namun kita sedang memantau secara rapi isu ini," katanya.

AKHBAR : KOSMO
MUKA SURAT : 1
RUANGAN : MUKA HADAPAN



AKHBAR : KOSMO
 MUKA SURAT : 6
 RUANGAN : NEGARA

Aktiviti jualan produk terbabit akan dipantau

Jual energy stick boleh dijel, denda

Oleh MUHAMMAD NAJIB
 AHMAD FUAD dan KHAIRUL
 MOHD. ALI

PUTRAJAYA – Individu yang menjual 'energy stick' berdepan hukuman denda maksimum RM25,000 atau penjara tidak melebihi tiga tahun berikutan produk berkenaan tidak berdaftar dengan Pihak Berkuasa Kawalan Dadah (PBKD) seperti peruntukan undang-undang di bawah Akta Jualan Dadah 1952.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr. Muhammad Radzi Abu Hassan berkata, pihaknya akan melaksanakan pemantauan dan tindakan penguatkuasaan ke atas penjual dikesan menjual produk berkenaan.

"Hasil saringan awal di platform e-dagang seperti Shopee dan Lazada, Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) turut mengesan terdapat pengiklanan dan penjualan produk itu oleh penjual tempatan dan luar negara.

"KKM melalui Bahagian Penguatkuasaan Farmasi akan mengambil tindakan penguatkuasaan sewajarnya iaitu memastikan iklan-iklan produk tersebut diturunkan," katanya menerusi kenyataan semalam.

Jelasnya, penjualan produk kesihatan yang tidak berdaftar adalah melanggar Peraturan 7(1) (a), Peraturan-Peraturan Kawalan Dadah dan Kosmetik 1984.

"Individu yang didapati bersalah boleh dikenakan hukuman denda maksimum RM25,000 atau penjara tidak melebihi tiga tahun atau kedua-duanya untuk kesalahan pertama dan denda maksimum RM50,000 atau penjara tidak melebihi lima tahun atau kedua-duanya untuk kesalahan berikutnya.

"Bagi syarikat yang melakukan kesalahan sama boleh didenda sehingga RM50,000 untuk kesalahan pertama dan denda hingga RM100,000 untuk kesalahan berikutnya," ujarnya.



PENJUAL 'energy stick' berdepan hukuman denda tidak melebihi RM25,000 atau penjara maksimum tiga tahun. - GAMBAR HIASAN



KERATAN Kosmo! semalam.

Muhammad Radzi menasihati pengguna untuk memastikan produk kesihatan yang dijual mempunyai pelekat Hologram dan Nombor Pendaftaran Produk (MAL) sebelum membeli produk tersebut.

Di **Johor Bahru**, Timbalan Menteri Pendidikan, Wong Kah Woh berkata, pihaknya belum menerima sebarang aduan berhubung penggunaan energy stick dalam kalangan murid serta pelajar sekolah setakat ini.

Beliau turut meminta mana-mana pihak yang mahu menyalurkan aduan boleh berbuat demikian menerusi Sistem Pengurusan Aduan Awam (Sispa) Kementerian Pendidikan (KPM).

Katanya, perkara itu penting bagi memastikan KPM dapat mengambil langkah pencegahan awal berhubung perkara tersebut sebelum keadaan menjadi lebih mudarat.

"Buat masa ini KPM masih belum terima aduan melibatkan sekolah rendah dan menengah, tetapi jika ada, kita akan ambil tindakan tegas untuk pastikan kesihatan dan kebajikan murid-murid dan pelajar sekolah terjaga.

"Kita mahu pentadbiran setiap sekolah memantau perkara ini dan jika ada berlaku apa-apa kes, mereka hendaklah terus melaporkan ke KPM. Kita pandang serlus isu ini," katanya.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 15
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Energy stick bukan keluaran berdaftar - KKM

Penjualan produk itu secara dalam talian boleh dikenakan tindakan

PUTRAJAYA

Siasatan awal Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) mendapati produk penyedut hidung atau *energy stick* bukan keluaran berdaftar.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Muhammad Radzi Abu Hassan berkata, pemantauan serta tindakan penguatkuasaan akan dijalankan terhadap mereka yang menjual produk berkenaan secara dalam talian disyaki tidak berdaftar.

"Hasil saringan awal di platform e-dagang seperti Shopee dan Lazada, pihak KKM turut mengesan terdapat pengiklanan dan penjualan produk tersebut oleh penjual tempatan dan luar negara," katanya dalam kenyataan di sini pada Khamis.

Beliau berkata, KKM melalui Bahagian Penguatkuasaan Farmasi akan mengambil tindakan penguatkuasaan sewajarnya iaitu memastikan iklan-iklan produk berkenaan diturunkan.

Dr Muhammad Radzi berkata, penjualan produk kesihatan yang tidak berdaftar adalah melanggar Peraturan 7(1)(a), Peraturan-Peraturan Kawalan Dadah dan Kosmetik 1984.

Beliau berkata, individu yang didapati bersalah boleh dikenakan denda sehingga RM25,000 atau penjara tidak melebihi tiga tahun atau kedua-duanya untuk kesalahan pertama dan denda tidak melebihi RM50,000 atau penjara sehingga lima tahun atau kedua-duanya untuk kesalahan kedua dan berikutnya.

Sementara itu, bagi syarikat yang melakukan kesalahan sama, beliau berkata, mereka boleh dikenakan denda sehingga RM50,000 untuk kesalahan pertama dan sehingga RM100,000 untuk kesalahan berikutnya.

Dr Muhammad Radzi berkata, pengguna perlu memastikan produk kesihatan yang dijual mempunyai pekat hologram dan nombor pendaftaran produk (MAL)



Poster hebahan Public Health Malaysia mengenai *energy stick* yang dimuat naik di platform X, Ahad lalu.

sebelum membeli produk berkenaan.

Status pendaftaran produk boleh disemak dengan melayari laman sesawang <https://www.npra.gov.my> atau menghubungi Pusat Panggilan Farmasi Kebangsaan di talian 1-800-88-6722.

Orang ramai juga boleh memuat turun aplikasi NPRA Product Status daripada Google Play Store bagi tujuan semakan tersebut. - *Bernama*

Salur aduan ke SISPAAP KPM

JOHOR BAHRU - Orang ramai diminta menyalurkan aduan mengenai penggunaan produk penyedut hidung atau *energy stick* dalam kalangan pelajar di laman web Sistem Pengurusan Aduan Awam (SISPAAP) Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (KPM).

Timbalan Menteri Pendidikan, Wong Kah Woh berkata, ia penting bagi memastikan Kementerian dapat mengambil langkah sewajarnya berhubung perkara itu sebelum keadaan menjadi lebih mudarat.

"Bagaimanapun setakat ini KPM masih belum menerima sebarang aduan melibatkan sekolah rendah dan menengah, tetapi sekiranya ada kita akan ambil tindakan tegas bagi memastikan kesihatan dan kebajikan pelajar terjaga.

"Kita mahu orang ramai khususnya pentadbiran setiap sekolah memantau perkara ini dan jika ada berlaku apa-apa kes, mereka hendaklah terus melaporkan kepada KPM," katanya selepas menyempurnakan Majlis Penyerahan Cek Cura Bantuan Awal Persekolahan (BAP) Negeri Johor 2024 di Dewan Seminar Jabatan Pendidikan Negeri (JPN) Johor di sini pada Khamis.

Beliau berkata, KPM mempunyai pasukan untuk memantau aduan yang diterima dan setiap aduan akan dibincangkan dalam mesyuarat pasca-Kabinet.

Katanya, selain laman web SISPAAP iaitu <https://moe.spab.gov.my/eApps/system/index.do> aduan juga boleh disalurkan terus kepada JPN dan juga Pejabat Pendidikan Daerah.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 23
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Pesakit HTAR terima bakul makanan dan angpau

KLANG - Sudah pastinya tiada siapa mahu sakit dan tinggal di wad hospital khususnya warga Tionghua ketika Tahun Baharu Cina akan disambut pada Sabtu ini.

Namun, dengan semangat untuk sembuh dan dapat menjalani kehidupan seperti biasa, Ong Ah No, 76, yang menghidap pelbagai jenis penyakit tetap menguatkan diri dan kekal tabah.

Warga emas itu memberitahu bahawa dia tidak kisah beraya di hospital asalakan penyakitnya dapat diubati.

"Paling penting kesihatan saya di wad ini dapat dipantau dan dijaga oleh doktor dan jururawat," katanya ketika ditemui di wad Hospital Tengku Ampuan Rahimah (HTAR) di sini.

Ah No adalah antara 100 penerima sumbangan bakul makanan di wad HTAR sempena program anjuran Ahli Lembaga Pelawat HTAR pada Khamis.

Hadir sama, Ahli Dewan



Tuck Chee (empat dari kiri) menyampaikan sumbangan lima buah petugas kesihatan sempena lawatan di HTAR, Klang pada Khamis.

Undangan Negeri (ADUN) Pandamaran, Leong Tuck Chee diiringi Pengerusi Ahli Lembaga Pelawat HTAR, Mohd Shahrul Hafis Mohd Suffian.

Keluarga seorang lagi pesakit, Sandy Tee, 60, pula berkata, abang iparnya, Pee Teck Ho, 72, terpaksa menyambut Tahun Baharu Cina buat kali pertama di hospital pada tahun

ini.

"Kami akan ke hospital pada Sabtu ini untuk meraikan sambutan Tahun Baharu Cina bersama kerana dia tidak pernah menyambut tahun baharu di hospital sebelum ini," ujarnya.

Lebih menyedihkan, katanya, abang iparnya itu tidak mempunyai keluarga sendiri dan memerlukan sokongan ahli ke-

luarga lain untuk cepat sembuh dan dapat mengurangkan kesedihannya.

Sementara itu, Tuck Chee dan Mohd Shahrul ketika melawat pesakit turut menasihati agar mereka sentiasa menjaga makan minum dan mendengar nasihat doktor agar cepat sembuh.

Terdahulu, seramai 100 pe-

sakit termasuk bukan warga Tionghua menerima sumbangan berupa bungkus makanan dan angpau sumbangan Tuck Chee dan Mohd Shahrul.

Kedua-dua mereka juga berkesempatan meluangkan masa kira-kira sejam melawat sambil beramah mesra dengan pesakit.

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA
MUKA SURAT : 1
RUANGAN : MUKA HADAPAN

Lepasan SPM tidak berminat belajar bidang perubatan

Malaysia kurang doktor pelatih

Oleh **JUANI MUNIR ABU BAKAR**
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PETALING JAYA: Malaysia kini kekurangan doktor pelatih apabila jumlah yang menjalani peringkat awal latihan sebagai pegawai perubatan menyusut sebanyak 47 peratus sejak 2020.

Penyusutan bilangan doktor pelatih itu mencetuskan kebimbangan kerana boleh mendatangkan pelbagai impak

termasuk peningkatan beban ditanggung tenaga kerja memandangkan lebih 70 peratus rakyat bergantung kepada sistem penjagaan kesihatan awam.

Antara faktor dikenal pasti menjadi punca kemerosotan tersebut adalah lepasan Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) tidak berminat belajar bidang perubatan.

Selain itu, terdapat graduan perubatan berhijrah ke luar negara seurus selepas tamat pengajian kerana melihat

prospek kerjaya lebih baik.

Bercakap kepada *Utusan Malaysia*, Presiden Persatuan Perubatan Malaysia (MMA), Dr. Azizan Abdul Aziz berkata, jumlah doktor pelatih merosot berbanding lebih 6,000 orang ketika 2019 kepada 3,000 individu yang masing-masing direkodkan pada tahun 2022 dan 2023.

Bersambung di muka 2

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA
MUKA SURAT : 2
RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

Malaysia kurang doktor pelatih

Dari muka 1

Katanya, angka itu menyaksikan kemerosotan 47 peratus doktor pelatih sepanjang tempoh tersebut.

Beliau berkata, masalah tersebut tidak seharusnya berlaku memandangkan kerajaan meletakkan kuota jurusan perubatan setiap tahun adalah sebanyak 4,820 orang, sebaliknya jumlah terkini masih rendah iaitu sekitar 4,000 orang.

"Kami tidak tahu apakah punca (kekurangan doktor pelatih), namun terdapat 2,491 graduan perubatan dilahirkan pada 2020, manakala 3,132 dan 3,934 masing-masing pada 2021 dan 2022.

"MMA tidak mempunyai angka untuk 2023, tetapi sebenarnya kerajaan menjangkakan keluaran 3,934 graduan perubatan tempatan pada setiap tahun dalam tempoh tiga tahun yang membabitkan 2,281 universiti awam dan 1,653 institusi pengajian tinggi swasta.

"Jumlah kemasukan kuota pelajar perubatan yang dibenarkan Kementerian Kesihatan setiap tahun adalah 4,820 orang, sebaliknya keluaran graduan masih rendah sekitar 4,000 sahaja," katanya.

Untuk maklumat, mana-mana graduan perubatan perlu menjalani program doktor pelatih sekurang-kurangnya selama dua tahun sebelum bergelar sebagai seorang pegawai perubatan.

Mengulas lanjut, Dr Azizan berkata, MMA berpandangan kerajaan perlu menjelaskan punca penurunan bilangan doktor pelatih sedangkan sekitar 4,000 graduan perubatan dihasilkan pada setiap tahun.

Kata beliau, pihaknya juga melihat perancangan pengambilan doktor pelatih seharusnya seiring dengan keluaran graduan setiap tahun di samping



KERAJAAN perlu jelaskan punca penurunan bilangan doktor pelatih sedangkan sekitar 4,000 graduan perubatan dihasilkan setiap tahun.

mempunyai perancangan untuk penempatan bakal pegawai-pegawai perubatan.

"Kami berharap kerajaan dapat menjelaskan sebab-sebab penurunan pelantikan HO (doktor pelatih) walaupun 2,000 hingga 4,000 graduan perubatan dihasilkan setiap tahun," katanya.

Namun Kementerian Kesihatan baru-baru ini memutuskan proses pengambilan doktor pelatih disingkatkan kepada dua bulan, berbanding tempoh menunggu hampir dua tahun sekarang di samping turut mengadakan enam kali pengambilan dalam setahun.

Dalam pada itu, jurucakap Gerakan Hartal Doktor Kontrak berkata, kerajaan dicadangkan untuk mengambil beberapa langkah antaranya memperbanyakkan slot jurusan perubatan di universiti awam dan menawarkan lebih banyak biasiswa untuk pelajar lepasan SPM dalam bidang perubatan.

Selain itu katanya, memperbaiki sistem kontrak kepada status tetap sama ada dengan

penarikan atau Kumpulan Wang Simpanan Pekerja di samping membuka laluan sepenuhnya untuk doktor-doktor menjadi pakar serta menambah baik tangga gaji dan elaun doktor.

Beliau menjelaskan punca penurunan doktor pelatih disebabkan pelbagai faktor antaranya kurang graduan perubatan sejak kebelakangan ini disebabkan ramai belia khususnya lepasan SPM tidak berminat memasuki bidang tersebut.

"Malah ramai doktor dalam sektor kerajaan dah berhenti sebab faktor tekanan kerja dan gaji yang tidak setimpal dengan kerja," katanya.

Di samping itu katanya, terdapat graduan perubatan berhijrah ke negara lain kerana mahu merebut peluang prospek kerjaya dan imbuhan lebih baik.

Dalam pada itu, Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Muhammad Radzi Abu Hassan ketika dihubungi memaklumkan, pihak Kementerian akan memberi penjelasan lanjut kepada *Utusan Malaysia* mengenai dakwaan itu.

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 1
RUANGAN : MUKA HADAPAN



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Watch out tomorrow!
What will the most powerful zodiac animal bring us in 2024? Check out the predictions of how you will do in terms of wealth, career, relationships and health.

Be happy, eat healthy

It's a time for reunion dinners and festivities but Malaysians need to be careful not to overeat, which can lead to health problems, say medical experts and dieticians. They agree that the celebrations should be enjoyed but food that is high in salt and sugar should be consumed moderately. > **See reports on page 4**
by **GERARD GIMINO, TEH ATHIRA YUSOF, LO TERN CHERN and WANI MUTHIAH**

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 2
RUANGAN : NATION

Health Ministry to take action on 'energy sticks' sold online

PETALING JAYA: The Health Ministry says it will act on complaints from the public about "energy sticks", a vape-like nasal inhaler, being sold online.

For a start, it said that advertisements for the products - which have not been registered with the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency as required by the Sale of Drugs Act 1952 - will be taken down from popular e-commerce platforms.

"Monitoring and enforcement action will also be taken (against) the sellers," Health director-general Datuk Dr Muhammad

Radzi Abu Hassan said in a statement yesterday.

"Early checks on (popular) e-commerce platforms by the ministry found local and foreign sellers advertising and selling the product.

"The ministry, through its Pharmacy Enforcement Division, will take enforcement action by removing the advertisements," he added.

He said those who sell unregistered health products are in breach of Rule 7(1) (a) of the Control of Drugs and Cosmetics Regulations 1984.

Those found guilty face a fine of up to RM25,000 or up to three years' jail or both for the first offence, the Health director-general said.

For subsequent offences, those convicted can be fined up to RM50,000, jailed for up to five years, or both.

Dr Muhammad Radzi reminded consumers to make sure that any products with claimed health benefits have the ministry-issued hologram sticker and product registration number before buying them.

"The Health Ministry is commit-

ted to protecting the health and wellbeing of the public through continuous monitoring.

"The people are encouraged to make complaints and channel information to the Pharmacy Enforcement Division at <https://www.pharmacy.gov.my> or the Public Complaints Management Agency (Sispaa) at <https://moh.spab.gov.my> or at 03-78413200," he added.

It was reported recently that the ministry had received complaints from a public health group about the availability of the product, priced as low as RM2.50 and

targeting young children.

Local advertisements for the vape-like products show two-pronged nasal inhalers, which come in a range of common vape flavours.

Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said on Sunday (Feb 4) immediate action would be taken to curb the sale of such products.

Earlier yesterday, Deputy Education Minister Wong Kah Woh urged schools throughout the country to immediately report any cases of "energy stick" use among students.

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Season to lessen seasoning

Medical professionals say food moderation is vital during CNY

By GERARD GIMINO and
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PETALING JAYA: It's the eve of Chinese New Year, and there will be the long-awaited reunion dinners and other get-togethers for at least a fortnight.

Amidst the good times and good food, healthy eating advocates said exercising moderation when eating is key while enjoying the festivities.

They say the public should opt for less sweet and salty foods, schedule designated eating times, and politely decline meals during house visits to avoid overeating.

Malaysian Society for World Action on Salt, Sugar and Health (MyWASSH) president Emeritus Prof Datin Dr Chia Yook Chin said the sensible approach during the festive season was not to gorge and limit the total calorie intake.

"One should enjoy, but the main thing is portion size, as smaller portion sizes mean less or fewer calories," she said.

Dr Chia, who heads the Department of Medical Sciences, School of Medical and Life Sciences at Sunway University, said sweet drinks and alcohol are some items the public consumes without knowing or being aware of the calories those drinks contain.

"We eat too much, sometimes more than necessary, during the festive period... You can enjoy and treat yourselves, but not excessively."

Dr Chia Yook Chin

"Definitely, we eat too much, sometimes more than necessary, during the festive period.

"What we can strive to do is limit ourselves by not bingeing and gorging for the whole Chinese New Year period.

"You can enjoy and treat yourselves, but not excessively," she said.

Dr Chia said those with diabetes, high cholesterol or kidney disease also had to be more careful with their food intake.

"Discuss with your doctors and dietitians what and how much more you can eat during the festive season," she added.

She also pointed out that it was essential to eat healthily from a young age.

"Many illnesses can be prevented by adopting good and healthy lifestyles," she said.

Holistic health proponent Datuk Dr Rajen M. said one could schedule eating times whenever possible.

"If you're on house visits and food is offered, don't be afraid to decline politely if you are already full.

"You can also opt for healthier options," he said.

If one finds themselves overeating, Dr Rajen said consuming ginger and Chinese tea could help.

"Practice caution. Enjoy the food, not so much in quantity but in quality," he said.

He added that those celebrating should refrain from being sedentary during the festive season.

"Do some walking where possible. Take breaks between meals and be aware that some foods consumed are not as healthy," he said.

Consultant dietitian Georgette Thye said utilising smaller plates could be a means of controlling food intake.

He pointed out that festive feasts also tempted one to indulge beyond their needs, leading to bloating, indigestion and potential weight gain.

"Opt for naturally flavoured dishes. Choose options cooked with herbs and spices instead of relying on salty sauces," he said.

"Go for less gravy too. Stews and broth-based dishes are popular during Chinese New Year. Consider leaving some of the gravy behind to reduce sodium intake for better blood pressure management," he said.

Thye, a Malaysian Dietitians' Association (MDA) council member, also proposed water, unsweetened tea or homemade fruit infusions as alternatives to sugary drinks.

"If you have diabetes, regularly check your blood sugar levels, particularly two hours after a meal," he said.

Thye said lean proteins such as fish, prawns, skinless chickens or tofu could be opted for over fatty meats.

He said fresh fruit desserts were also an option to replace sugary pastries.

Plain nuts and seeds are also a healthier snack alternative, as they are a good source of healthy fats and fibre, he said.

"Listen to your body; stop eating when you feel comfortably full instead of pushing yourself to finish everything on your plate.

"Drinking plenty of water also helps keep you feeling full and curbs cravings," said Thye.

Tackling common diseases one grain at a time

PETALING JAYA: Malaysia aims to reduce its population's sodium and sugar intake in order to combat the country's rising noncommunicable disease (NCD) rate.

In the Plan of Action for 2021-2025 by the Health Ministry, it targets reducing the mean salt intake of the adult population to 6.0g per day by the year 2025.

Even that may be a little on the high side. The World Health Organization's (WHO) recommended intake is one teaspoon, or 5g of salt, which contains about 2.3g of sodium.

A Malaysian Community Salt Survey (MyCoSS) study in 2019 reported that a staggering 79% of Malaysians are consuming too much salt, at a daily intake of 7.9g or 1.6 teaspoons of salt.

Among the major consequences of salt overconsumption are heart attacks, strokes and other NCD-related health issues.

The National Health Morbidity Survey (NHMS) 2019 reported that 30% of adults over 18 are also at risk of hypertension.

Efforts to reduce salt intake include the Health Ministry's Salt Reduction Strategy 2021-2025, launched in May last year to focus on the involvement of the food and beverage industry to reformulate products with less and healthier salt content.

The NHMS 2019 found that one in every two Malaysian adults is overweight or obese, while one-fifth of Malaysian adults suffer from diabetes.

The same survey also reported that the rate of increase in diabetic patients across the country has gone up from 11.2% in 2011 to 13.4% in 2015 and spiked to 18.3% in 2019.

Over 80% of those with elevated blood glucose levels but not known to have diabetes were aged 60 years and below.

This survey also found that 50.1% of adults in Malaysia were overweight or obese, with 30.4% being overweight and 19.7% obese.

Children between the ages of five and 17 were also found to be overweight and obese at 15% and 14.8% in 2019, respectively.

When presenting the 2024 Budget address in October last year, Finance Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim announced a 10sen rise in the excise duty levied on premixed sugary beverages as one of the measures to combat excessive sugar consumption.

The Prime Minister said the revenue from the tax would be channelled to address and treat the disease of diabetes, including support for dialysis centres.

On Nov 25, Anwar also called for all ministries to reduce sugar consumption at all gatherings and implement campaigns to reduce sugar in people's diets.

In October last year, the Health Ministry launched the Sugar Reduction Advocacy Campaign 2023 to educate and encourage Malaysians to reduce their sugar intake.

Feast on festive food – but be cautious

By WANI MUTHIAH
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KLANG: Since it is the norm for Malaysians to eat and be merry during festivals, medical experts say it will be wise to not throw caution to the wind when enjoying festive food and drinks.

However, healthy people could let their hair down and indulge for a short period of time during festivals, said cardiologist Dr Kannan Pasamanikam.

"No harm should come from a short period of indulgence, but of course, this does not cover alcohol, as any overindulgence by even healthy people will be detrimental," he said.

According to Dr Kannan, too much alcohol can acutely affect the heart and induce an irregular rhythm called atrial fibrillation which can be dangerous.

People with diabetes, high blood pressure and heart conditions should be careful about their sugar and salt intake, said Dr Kannan.

"Foods that are sweet will cause diabetics to lose control of their glucose levels, and excessive salt intake will be dangerous for people with high blood pressure as well as those who are on heart failure treatment, as control of their illness may be lost," said Dr Kannan.

He added that moderation is the key. Clinical dietitian Rozanna Md Rosly concurred that moderation was the key and added that people must avoid overeating even during festivals.



Light bites: One expert urge that meals be cooked with healthier ingredients or serve vegetarian dishes.

"While everyone is entitled to a little indulgence especially during the festive season, moderation is a must," said Rozanna, who is attached to a private hospital.

She said it would be advisable to limit high-fat foods such as pork belly, poultry and animal skin, as well as pork trotters and chicken feet.

"Also limit high-cholesterol foods, such as offal, shrimp paste and crab paste, as well as preserved foods like salted fish and Chinese preserved sausages," advised Rozanna.

To avoid overeating when visiting, Rozanna said the best way is to avoid being hungry, as one tends to overeat when one is hungry.

According to her, it would be ideal to have a snack before going out to open houses.

She also said those cooking could opt for using healthier ingredients or serve vegetarian dishes.

"Many vegetables that have auspicious-sounding names are often used in Chinese New Year dishes too," she added.

FOR MORE:
See page 10

She cited as examples leek (suan), which sounds like counting in Chinese; lettuce (sheng cai), which sounds like the word for creating wealth; and radish (cai tao in Hokkien), meaning good sign.

Rozanna advised revellers to eat moderately and perform some physical activity, like walking, after eating to prevent bloating.

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Ministry clamps down on sale of 'energy sticks'

■ BY QALIF ZUHAIR
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KUALA LUMPUR: Following public complaints, the Health Ministry is acting against the online sale of unregistered "energy sticks", which are a form of nasal inhaler products that can damage the mucus in the nasal cavity and cause injuries, bleeding and infections.

Health Director-General Datuk Dr Muhammad Radzi Abu Hassan said the ministry's Pharmacy Enforcement Division (PED) is also set to promptly enforce the removal of such advertisements.

"Initial investigations reveal that the energy sticks are not registered with the Drug Control Authority, which contravenes the provisions of the Drug Sale Act 1952.

"Sellers found offering these unregistered products for sale will face strict enforcement measures," he said, adding that the ministry is monitoring e-commerce platforms where advertisements and sale of such products have been detected.

With a shelf life of three years, energy sticks are small, two-pronged nasal inhalers, typically having flavours such as peppermint

▶ Apart from monitoring online platforms and removing advertisements, sellers to face stern action, says Health DG

and grape. They are encapsulated in a 2g bar resembling a vape and are designed to allegedly provide users with energy and freshness.

Public Health Malaysia, which is an outreach of the Health Ministry and emphasises the protection, prevention and promotion of a healthy way of life for the community, said on its Facebook page that energy sticks feature a double-hole design for nasal insertion.

"They bear resemblance to drug consumption as its method of use through nasal inhalation or snorting poses psychological risks, potentially encouraging users to experiment with other substances, thus presenting a danger."

Energy sticks are widely sold on e-commerce platforms like Shopee and Lazada at prices ranging from RM2.50 to RM10.

Muhammad Radzi said

Regulation 7(1)(a) of the Drugs and Cosmetics Control Regulations 1984 provides that individuals found guilty of selling unregistered health products be fined not exceeding RM25,000 or jailed for up to three years for the first offence.

"For subsequent offences, an individual may be fined not exceeding RM50,000 or jailed for up to five years. Companies that violate the regulation can be fined up to RM50,000 for the first offence and up to RM100,000 for subsequent offences."

He urged consumers to verify the authenticity of items marketed as "health products" before purchasing them, and ensuring they bear a hologram sticker and a Malaysian product registration number. The registration status of a product can be checked at the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency's website under the "Product Status"

section, or by contacting the National Pharmacy Call Centre at 1-800-88-6722.

The ministry, he said, is committed to safeguarding public health through continuous monitoring, and encouraged the public to report the sale of unregistered products to the Health Ministry's PED.

Muhammad Radzi said reports can be submitted through the ministry's website, the Public Agency Complaint Management System portal, nearby pharmaceutical enforcement branches, or by calling 03-7841-3200.

Meanwhile, Malaysia Retail Electronic Cigarette Association president Datuk Adzwan Ab Manas said energy sticks are not e-cigarettes.

"There have been instances where statements from various people and sellers have linked this product to e-cigarettes," he said.

On Feb 6, Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek called on parents and schools to deter students from using energy sticks and highlighted the urgency of addressing and combating the use of such products.