

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 7
RUANGAN : NATION

The Star M/s Nasion 23/5/2025 (Jumaat)

Health Ministry cracks down on fake meds

PETALING JAYA: Over 6,000 units of unregistered supplements worth RM16mil have been confiscated in the past five years, but fake medicines are still freely available in the market.

The Health Ministry is now intensifying efforts to crack down on such counterfeit medicines, telling consumers to exercise caution when purchasing medicines or supplements online.

"These fake health products are often sold by irresponsible individuals who are more interested in profit than public safety," its Pharmacy Enforcement Division told *The Star*.

The Star had reported on Saturday that supplements were being sold online with fake holograms and questionable content.

Counterfeit supplements often do not contain the correct active ingredients while some may contain too much, too little or none at all – and could be ineffective in treating a condition or make it worse.

"Many also contain dangerous or toxic substances. Additionally, these products are often manufactured in unsanitary environments, raising the risk of contamination," it said.

To safeguard public health, the division is intensifying efforts to monitor websites, social media platforms and online marketplaces to detect and investigate the sale of counterfeit products.

"Any identified links or listings will be subject to legal action," it said.

The division is also working closely with major e-commerce and social media platforms to ensure fake listings are swiftly removed and repeat offenders are taken off the market quickly.

In Malaysia, all pharmaceutical products and health supplements must be registered with the ministry's Drug Control Authority and need a valid registration number, which begins with MAL followed by a number. These packages will also have a security hologram on the packaging.

"Since 2005, the use of security holograms has played an important role in safeguarding consumers from counterfeit products.

"In 2019, the ministry introduced the FarmaTag hologram to enhance and modernise the existing system. FarmaTag allows consumers and enforcement authorities to verify the authenticity of registered products," it said.

Although counterfeiters have attempted to imitate the hologram, genuine products can still be identified by examining the unique security elements embedded in the FarmaTag label.

The ministry also encouraged consumers to scan the hologram using the FarmaChecker mobile application upon receiving the product, and is also organising public education initiatives to raise awareness.

platforms, and to be wary of heavily discounted products online as these are often counterfeits.

"Fake supplements can cause serious health complications, especially when consumed without proper medical supervision," it said.

Genuine products should always come in sealed original manufacturer packaging, it said.

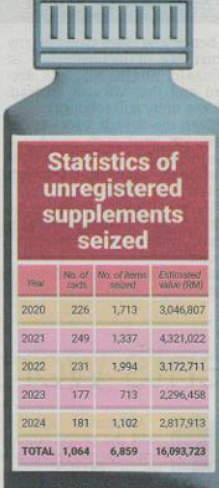
"If possible, compare the product with previous purchases. Any noticeable changes in pill size, shape, colour, taste or markings should raise suspicion," it noted.

"Be cautious of tablets or capsules that appear cracked, powdery or unusually coated with excess powder or crystals."

Buyers can report sellers of counterfeits, especially those operating through online channels, to the division.

"Consumers should also be on guard against unsolicited offers, particularly through spam emails or flashy advertisements on social media platforms. These are common tactics used by counterfeit product sellers to lure unsuspecting buyers with 'too-good-to-be-true' deals," the division said.

Consumers can also visit the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency's website at <http://npra.moh.gov.my> to verify the registration status of any health products. Counterfeit products can also be reported through the Public Agency Complaints Management System (SisPAA).



Year	No. of cards	No. of items seized	Estimated value (RM)
2020	226	1,713	3,046,807
2021	249	1,337	4,321,022
2022	231	1,994	3,172,711
2023	177	713	2,296,458
2024	181	1,102	2,817,913
TOTAL	1,064	6,859	16,093,723

Source: Health Ministry

"One key initiative is the Tolak Ubat Tidak Sah (TOBaTS) campaign, a nationwide effort to educate the public about the dangers of using unregistered and counterfeit medicines," the division said.

It also advised consumers to buy their medicines and supplements from reputable sources such as licensed pharmacies or verified

AKHBAR : THE SUN
MUKA SURAT : 4
RUANGAN : NATIONAL

The Sun M/S4 National 23/5/2025 (FRIDAY)
HFMD situation in Selangor under control

SHAH ALAM: The hand, foot and mouth disease situation in Selangor is under control and showing early signs of recovery following coordinated control measures.

State Public Health and Environment Committee chairman Jamaliah Jamaluddin said Selangor recorded 39,233 cases as of epidemiological week 19, which ended on May 10.

She noted a significant rise in infections between weeks 15 and 19, particularly after the first week of the Aidilfitri celebration.

"The increase is attributed to more active movement of people, social visits, close interactions among children in crowded settings such as relatives' homes, and the sharing of food and toys.

"Another factor is the lax screening at childcare facilities, which has hampered efforts to detect and isolate symptomatic children," she said in a statement yesterday.

Jamaliah added that nine cases involving the Enterovirus 71 variant were reported – seven in Sabak Bernam and two in Hulu Langat.

One patient in Sabak Bernam was hospitalised and has since fully recovered, while the others received outpatient treatment.

She said most clusters occurred in childcare and early education centres, including nurseries, kindergartens, preschools and tuition centres at 42.8%, followed by primary schools at 5%, day care centres at 3% and secondary schools at 0.2%. The remaining 49% were home-based.

As of week 19, 627 premises were closed, 192 voluntarily closed and 435 placed under the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act 1988.

"Voluntary closures involved 63 nurseries, 81 kindergartens, 25 government-run preschools, 15 preschools, one care centre, six primary schools and one other premises.

"Enforced closures included 168 nurseries, 157 kindergartens, 69 government preschools, 29 preschools, two care centres and 10 primary schools."

Jamaliah said the Selangor Health Department has instructed for increased sample collection, especially at institutions and among hospitalised patients, to improve monitoring and detection of virus variants.

She advised parents not to send symptomatic children to care or educational centres, and to ensure they remain at home until fully recovered.

Operators of early childhood education centres are also urged to refuse entry to symptomatic children, conduct health screenings at entry points and maintain a high level of hygiene.

She added that the state government, through the Public Health Committee, will distribute educational materials on the disease, including information on symptoms and preventive measures, to nurseries and kindergartens in high-incidence areas.

"This initiative aims to strengthen community awareness and preparedness. The state government remains committed to working closely with the Selangor Health Department and all relevant agencies to control the outbreak effectively," – Bernama



Jamaliah advised parents not to send symptomatic children to care or educational centres, and to ensure they remain at home until fully recovered. – MASRY CHE ANI/THESUN

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO

MUKA SURAT : 6

RUANGAN : LOKAL

Harian Metro 6 Mei 2025 (Jumaat)

Segera turun iklan promosi e-rokok

Klang: Semua peniaga di Selangor diarah menurunkan iklan penjualan dan promosi berkaitan rokok elektronik sebelum tindakan lebih tegas dikenakan.

Exco Kerajaan Tempatan dan Pelancongan Selangor, Datuk Ng Suee Lim berkata, arahan kepada peniaga itu sudah dibincangkan dan diperseutujui dalam Majlis Mesyuarat Kerajaan Negeri (MMKN), baru-baru ini.

Menurutnya, kerajaan negeri tidak mengeluarkan lesen untuk pengiklanan rokok elektronik dan peniaga didapati membuat iklan sendiri tanpa kebenaran.

"Kita tidak mahu menggalakkan lebih ramai masyarakat terjebak e-rokok, sebab itu iklan tidak berlesen dan sebagainya diarahkan untuk diturunkan."

"Dalam kawasan Majlis Bandaraya Diraja Klang (MBDK), kita dapati ada 45 premis yang mempunyai iklan dan menjual vape atau rokok elektronik, manakala di seluruh Selangor jumlahnya lebih besar terutama di kawasan bandar," katanya pada sidang media selepas lawatan rasmi ke MBDK di sini, semalam.

Ng berkata, pihak berkuasa tempatan (PBT) dibenarkan mengeluarkan notis kepada peniaga untuk mematuhan arahan itu dan mengambil tindakan selanjutnya sekiranya ada peniaga ingkar termasuk denda.

Katanya, ketika ini keputusan untuk pengharaman sepenuhnya penjualan e-rokok masih dalam kajian.

Media sebelum ini melaporkan, semua PBT di Selangor diarah menyita iklan memaparkan rokok elektronik atau vape di seluruh negeri, dengan negeri ini dalam proses pertimbangan untuk melarang penjualannya.

Exco Kesihatan Awam dan Alam Sekitar, Jamaliah Jamaluddin berkata, ia berikutan ancaman penggunaan rokok elektronik yang semakin membimbangkan khususnya terhadap generasi muda.



Kita tidak mahu menggalakkan lebih ramai masyarakat terjebak e-rokok"

Ng Suee Lim

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO

MUKA SURAT : 6

RUANGAN : LOKAL



AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 16

RUANGAN : VIEWS

The Star M1516 Views 23/5/2025 (Jumaat)

Close gaps in healthcare for mental illness

MENTAL healthcare in Malaysia is being treated like a luxury when it should be a lifeline to the people concerned. I'm saying this because I have seen many Malaysians struggling with the silent and painful burden of dealing with mental illness.

We hear slogans like "Mental health matters", but the reality is it feels like an option only for those who can afford mental healthcare. Access to comprehensive treatment remains out of reach for many people. Private therapy, for example, can cost up to RM200 per session. This is almost half of what some families spend on food for a week. Meanwhile, public clinics are overwhelmed, and the wait for one session can take months.

In rural areas, there are almost no services available to treat and support patients with mental illness. They are left to deal with anxiety, depression and trauma on their own. Some are told to stay strong, or to pray more. Rarely are they told that it is okay to seek help.

Even with good initiatives like mySalam, the government-funded scheme for people in the lower income brackets, the gaps

are still there. Last month, it was announced that mySalam would be expanded to cover mental

health conditions. However, the scheme only covers three conditions – major depressive disorders, schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. Patients diagnosed with these conditions are eligible for a one-off payment of RM8,000.

However, only those who were diagnosed by a registered medical practitioner from January this year are eligible. What about those who were diagnosed in 2023 or before and are still fight-

ing their illness every day? Are their struggles not valid? It seems like their pain is being ignored just because they were diagnosed earlier.

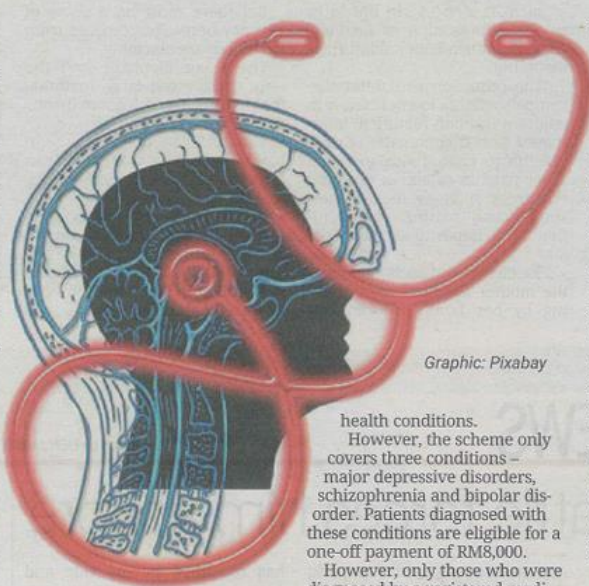
This is not how we should treat mental health illnesses. The government must expand the range of mental illnesses and also provide financial support for those who were diagnosed earlier.

We need affordable treatment options, more mental health officers in schools, universities and offices, and accessible services in small towns and villages.

More importantly, we need to change the way we talk about mental health. Stop the jokes; stop the shaming; and start real conversations.

Mental healthcare is a basic human right. No one should have to choose between buying food and getting help for their illness, and no one should feel invisible just because they were diagnosed before a certain date.

NUR IZZAH THURAYYA ROSILE
Part-time communication student
UiTM Shah Alam



Graphic: Pixabay