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Tips on saving your kidneys

By Angie Tan March 08, 2009 Categories: Your Community



THAT'S THE WAY: Kids having fun in a colouring contest at the WKD last year

World Kidney Day (WKD) will be celebrated on Thursday, for the fourth year running. The event is taking place more than 100 countries, across six continents.

It is a global health awareness campaign focusing on the importance of our kidneys and calling on people to check if they are at risk of kidney diseases.

This year, the campaign hopes to raise awareness on the importance of early and comprehensive screening for those in the high-risk categories.

The theme is "Amazing Kidneys 'Are Yours Healthy?'" It reflects on the vital role played by the kidneys to filter and clean 200 litres of our blood daily and to regulate blood pressure, which is both a cause and complication of chronic kidney disease (CKD).

As part of this year's campaign, the tagline "Keep your pressure down" highlights the benefits of better blood pressure control in slowing the progression of CKD.

The most common causes of CKD are diabetes and high blood pressure. When CKD worsens and leads to kidney failure, the next step is dialysis. Currently, Malaysia has almost 17,000 dialysis patients and the government, in recognition of the high cost of the treatment, subsidises the cost for poor and needy patients who qualify under the guidelines set by the Ministry of Health (MoH).

“National Kidney Foundation (NKF), with 22 dialysis centres, is a leading provider of dialysis but today we are no longer focused on dialysis alone as public education plays a major role in increasing awareness on the early detection and prevention of kidney disease,” said Dr S.S. Gill, chairman, board of managers, NKF.

In Malaysia, the WKD 2009 celebrations see the collaboration between the Malaysian Society of Nephrology (MSN) and the MoH.

As part of this nationwide campaign, NKF, together with MSN and MoH, have mobilised the NKF LifeCheck Mobile Health Screening Unit. The unit is a 40-seater customised bus with seven workstations that started a screening campaign at Kangar, Perlis, last Friday. The bus will stop and conduct health screenings for members of the public at Alor Setar, Bukit Mertajam and Sungai Siput, and reach Serdang on Thursday.

Apart from the roadshow, NKF will also hold a Family Day on March 29 for all NKF dialysis patients in Klang Valley at the Sunway Lagoon Theme Park.

There will also be a series of activities this month, including public forums and a “Health & Contests Fun Day” at South City Plaza, Seri Kembangan.

For more details about the WKD 2009 activities, call the NKF Hotline at 1300-88-3110 or log on to www.nkf.org.my, www.msn.org.my or email edu@nkf.org.my.