

# 'Supplements can't cure kidney disease'

## Ignorant patients still fall for false advertising, says medical expert

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**KUANTAN:** Supplement advertisements boasting to cure kidney diseases are just giving false hope to patients, said Hospital Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah medicine department head Dr Rafidah Abdullah.

Stressing that there were no supplements that could cure chronic kidney disease, she said about half

of affected patients at the hospital were taking supplements without knowing these were not going to help.

"There are no supplements that can cure chronic kidney disease once you are afflicted, but there are so many things out there being touted as cures.

"As medical professionals, we tell our patients that, so they ended up going to the *bomoh* and use supple-

ments instead," she said at the National Kidney Foundation's 13th Patient Forum here yesterday.

Dr Rafidah, who is a consultant nephrologist, said there were so many of these supplements in the market that it would be difficult to know which would end up causing more harm.

"It is prohibited by law to advertise supplements as the cure for kidney disease. My advice is supple-

ments are not necessary for treating kidney disease.

"They may cause harm so please do not take the risk," she said.

She also said haemodialysis was only a temporary measure and the real treatment for chronic kidney disease was organ transplant.

But due to a lack of donors, there were still more than 21,000 people on the organ transplant waiting list.

"We are actually seeing an

increase in the number of organ pledgers with more Malays signing up. The awareness is there but this has yet to translate into real organs for transplant.

"Last year, we only harvested kidneys from five donors nationwide. This can be due to a number of factors such as consent from relatives or the pledgers getting killed in road accidents," said Dr Rafidah.