

are your kidneys OK?



Winners of the colouring competition organised in conjunction with the World Kidney Day at Berjaya Times Square

Kidney disease is increasing rapidly in the developing world. With the ageing population and increasing incidence of obesity, hypertension and diabetes, the number of patients

with chronic kidney disease will continue to rise.

In our country, statistics indicate the number of patients on dialysis at 15,000 and the number is climbing. Every year, some 2,500 new patients require dialysis. The figure is alarming and programmes are needed to bring it down.

World Kidney Day, which fell on March 8, was one such opportunity, says Dr Tan Chwee Choon, a consultant nephrologist and president of MSN (Malaysian Society of Nephrology) and vice-chairman of the National Kidney Foundation.

Sponsors of World Kidney Day activities in Malaysia were Wyeth, Abbott, Baxter, Berjaya Times Square, Boehringer Ingelheim, Janssen-Cilag, Merck Sharp & Dohme, MPH Bookstores and Marrybrown.

Want to know more about what you can do to protect your kidneys? Get in touch with the NKF at 1300-883110.

feature renal disease awareness

number of kidney cases soars

Mary Celine Gomez writes on the alarming increase in kidney diseases in Malaysia and the rest of the world.

More than 500 million people worldwide – or about one in 10 adults – have some degree of kidney damage. And every year, millions die prematurely of heart attacks and strokes linked to kidney disease. Are you becoming a part of this statistic?

“Kidney disease is increasing rapidly in the developing world. With the ageing population and the increasing incidence of obesity, hypertension and diabetes, the number of patients with chronic kidney disease will continue to rise,” says Dr Tan Chwee Choon, a consultant nephrologist, and president of the Malaysian Society of Nephrology and vice-chairman of the

National Kidney Foundation (NKF).

In Malaysia, statistics indicate that the number of patients on dialysis stands at 15,000, with 2,500 new patients requiring the treatment every year. These are alarming figures and public education programmes are needed to bring these numbers down. World Kidney Day (WKD), held every year, presents one such effort.

To call attention to the crucial role of our kidneys and the pressing global need for the early detection



and prevention of kidney disease, hundreds of thousands of health care professionals, kidney patients, their families and friends in more than 40 countries, including Malaysia, joined hands to participate in WKD on 8th March 2007, with the theme 'Kidney Disease is Common, Harmful but Treatable – Are Your Kidneys OK?'

KIDNEY DISEASE IS COMMON, HARMFUL – BUT TREATABLE

Common because chronic kidney disease (CKD) has now been consistently shown to affect about 10 percent of the adult population in studies of different races living on different continents.

Harmful not just because some of these patients progress to end-stage renal disease (ESRD), but more so because kidney abnormalities are associated with a many-fold increase in risk of cardiovascular complications and premature cardiovascular death. Indeed, the risk of premature death, primarily from cardiovascular disease is, on average, 100 times higher in patients with CKD than the risk of developing ESRD.

Treatable because there is now strong scientific evidence that early detection, altering lifestyle factors and aggressively controlling blood pressure can not only slow or halt the progression of patients with CKD to ESRD, but can also significantly reduce the incidence of cardiovascular disease that leads to premature death in the majority of these patients.

SHARP INCREASE IN CASES

Dr Tan says the number of people requiring dialysis is increasing very fast.

"Back in 1980, only 43 people were accepted for dialysis, but the number increased to a whopping 2,636 in 2005.

"This is partly caused by the rise of diabetes and hypertension, which increase the risk for kidney disease. Approximately 50 percent of advanced kidney failures are due to diabetes mellitus and, if not detected and treated effectively, can lead to kidney failure and death.

"It is crucial for individuals to treat and manage kidney disease as early as possible, especially if they fall in the high-risk category, i.e. those who suffer from diabetes and high blood pressure. Proper treatment and management of kidney disease enables patients to maintain a good quality of life."

WHAT ARE THE TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH KIDNEY DISEASE?

Basically, there are three main forms of treatment for kidney disease:

- Haemodialysis
- Peritoneal dialysis
- Kidney transplant

Kidney transplantation is a permanent solution. However, it is normally restricted to severe cases as the scarcity of donors and difficulty in obtaining a match limits the number of patients who can receive one.

Unlike some other countries, where the majority of kidney donors are cadaveric (from a dead person), the organ transplantation programme in Malaysia is still heavily dependent on living-related donors.

The demand for donated organs far exceeds supply from local voluntary live donors. Thus, most patients with kidney disease are reliant on haemodialysis (HD) or peritoneal dialysis (PD) (*read the life of a PD caregiver on page 16*).

"Of the end-stage kidney patients in Malaysia who are receiving treatment, HD is the most common form of dialysis. However, this does not necessarily mean it is the best treatment.

"Both HP and PD are effective, but the choice of treatment depends on the patient's medical history, whether they are suffering from any other condition, their lifestyle requirements and other factors," says Dr Tan.

As a rule, doctors will take into account the health of the patient and the presence of any other medical condition to determine whether a patient is put on HD or PD. For example, PD is the recommended option for those with vascular problems as HD would not be suitable.

continued on page 70

"NUMBER OF KIDNEY CASES SOARS"
continued from page 41



FEW PLEDGE ORGANS

Despite our country's population of 27 million, there are only 102,457 registered organ pledgers.

In 2005, there were 13 organ/tissue donors, while in 2006, there were 25. During the first two months of this year, 652 people have pledged their organs.

The National Transplant Resource Centre's statistics show that the Chinese are the most likely to pledge or donate their organs, followed by Indians and Malays.

If you would like to give this *Gift of Life*, pledge yourself as an organ donor. You can get in touch with any of the centres listed below. After you have pledged your organs, it's also important to inform your next-of-kin of your intentions.

Pusat Sumber Transplan (Transplant Resource Centre)
Hospital Pulau Pinang,
Jalan Residensi,
10990 Pulau Pinang
Tel: 04-2293333 Ext 435,
04-2002436

Pusat Sumber Transplan Nasional (National Transplant Resource Centre)

Hospital Kuala Lumpur,
Jalan Pahang,
50586 Kuala Lumpur
Tel: 03-26942704,
03-26942705,
Email: ntrc@hkl.gov.my
ramayee@ijn.com.my

Pusat Sumber Pendermaan Organ (Organ Donation Resource Centre)

Hospital Ipoh, Jalan Hospital,
30990 Ipoh
Tel: 05-2533333 Ext 2324,
05-5222324

Pusat Sumber Transplan Negeri Johor

(Johor Transplant Resource Centre)
Hospital Sultanah Aminah,
80100 Johor Baru
Tel: 07-2231666 Ext 2751

Figures quoted from the National Transplant Resource Centre

QUICK FACTS ON THE PREVALENCE OF ESRD

- * In Malaysia, more than 2,500 people – or about 100 per million population – develop end-stage renal failure every year.
- * In some parts of the country, the treatment rate has reached 140 per million.
- * A survey conducted at the end of 2005 indicated that there were almost 13,000 patients on dialysis.
- * Dialysis acceptance rates continue to increase, albeit at a slower rate during the last few years. The dialysis acceptance rate for 2004 was the highest yet at 108 per million.
- * The number of new dialysis patients in 2005 was 2,636, an increase of over 40 percent from 2000.
- * Dialysis prevalence rates have also increased linearly over the last 10 years, from 138 per million in 1995 to 460 in 2004 and almost 500 in 2005.

- * The total number of dialysis patients is expected to increase to about 20,000 by the year 2008 if the current growth rate is maintained.
- * New transplant rates remain low over the years, fluctuating between five and seven per million population per year. HT

Figures quoted from the Malaysian National Registry report 2005