

Kidney patients on the rise

And, response to last year's education move was poor

By **CHONG SOO YIN**
metro@thestar.com.my

SHOWING its concern towards public's health, National Kidney Foundation of Malaysia (NKF), with the Health Ministry, and Malaysian Society of Nephrology, is organising a line of activities to celebrate the *World Kidney Day* tomorrow.

"About 15,000 people were diagnosed with kidney damage in Malaysia. We are also concerned about finding those at the early stage so as to prevent their condition from deteriorating," said NKF chief executive officer Goh Seng Chuan.

»The public lack awareness«

NKF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
GOH SENG CHUAN.

"This year, we stress on giving public education through public forum, exhibition and health screening at various places like colleges, universities and hospitals. Response was not good as only 3,824 people turned up for screening when we first organised it last year. The public lack awareness," he added.

"Those overweight, diabetic, hypertensive or smokers are at high risk of suffering kidney damage. Diabetes is the main cause in Malaysia though," said NKF's sec-

ond vice-chairman Dr Tan Chwee Choon.

"Research shows 10% of the world's adult population have kidney damage and the number of senior citizens, aged between 55 and 75, with this condition is also rising," he said.

"As the theme this year is *Kidney Disease: Common, Harmful but Treatable Are your kidneys ok?* we are emphasising on early detection, as it is common and harmful, but treatable.

"Healthy lifestyle and well controlled blood pressure can also protect kidney from damage," he said.

The foundation also want the public to take a simple urine test at the event and those tested positive will be recommended other tests to confirm.

World Kidney Day is celebrated every second Thursday of March. With this year's being the second celebration, NKF will be organising a *Walkathon* at Taman Tasik Titiwangsa on Saturday, *Children's Art Competition* at Berjaya Times Square on Sunday and also public forums and exhibition around Malaysia.

"Penang will organise a national celebration on *World Kidney Day* and Hospital Seremban will be having a treasure hunt on Saturday," said Hospital Kuala Lumpur's consultant nephrologist Dr Sunita Bavanandan.

For more details, call NKF at 03-7954 9048 or the hotline at 1300-88-3110.