

Child kidney disease becoming an **issue**

> Parents urged to take note of the problem and seek medical help early

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PETALING JAYA: Kidney problems among children is becoming an issue in Malaysia due to parents not detecting the disease early.

Kidney experts say that if parents had noticed the symptoms early, the disease could have been treated

promptly and cured.

Some 1,000 children have been identified with some form of kidney disease recently but experts say the number could just be the tip of the iceberg.

National Kidney Foundation's (NKF) board of directors chairman, Datuk Dr



Zaki Morad Mohd Zaher (pix), said parents must take note of this problem.

As at December 2014, there were 519 students under the age of 18 on haemodialysis, 278 patients on peritoneal dialysis while 180 of the

children were on the kidney transplant list.

"I think awareness is the only word I can suggest here because the children out there might be too young to complain when they have problems with their kidneys.

"One of the early signs of the problem is loss of appetite," he told *theSun*, adding that parents should always take their children with such problems to a paediatrician for assessment.

At present, there are about 1,000 children out of 36,000 patients (including adults) having to go through dialysis while the total number of children on dialysis in 2013 was 758 and 733 in 2012.

"Another major cause of the kidney problem among children is what we call

'Glomerulonephritis' where the children may go through infections which normally starts from the throat and it may lead to kidney inflammation.

On the availability of child dialysis centres in Malaysia, Zaki Morad said most hospitals in the country are equipped with dialysis machines, except for Selayang Hospital and Kuala Lumpur Hospital.

"These two hospitals have their own paediatric specialists and their dialysis ward is separated from that for adult patients," he added.

He also pointed out that some 29,071 adults were on dialysis in 2012 and 31,631 in 2013.

Today is World Kidney Day and the theme for this year is "Kidney Disease & Children: Act Early To Prevent It!"

Kidney diseases affect millions of people worldwide, including many children who may be at risk of kidney disease at an early age.

It is therefore crucial that we encourage and facilitate education, early detection and a healthy life style in children, to combat the increase of preventable kidney diseases and treat children with inborn and acquired disorders of the kidneys.