



**Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang**  
**Consumers Association of Penang**  
**檳城消費人協會 பிளாங்கு பயனீட்டாளர் சங்கம்**

10 Jalan Masjid Negeri, 11600 Pulau Pinang, Malaysia  
Tel: 604-8299511 Fax: 604-8298109  
email: [consumerofpenang@gmail.com](mailto:consumerofpenang@gmail.com)

Websites:  
(in English, BM, Chinese,  
& Tamil)  
[www.consumer.org.my](http://www.consumer.org.my)

**Press Statement**

**6 April 2023**

**CAP: Practice the culture of healthy living**

The Consumers Association of Penang calls on Malaysians to practice the culture of healthy living in their lives by carrying out physical activities, eating healthy and looking after their mental health in order to strengthen immunity in fighting against diseases.

The call is made in conjunction with World Health Day (WHD), which is held every year on 7 April, to mark the anniversary of the founding of the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1948. The unparalleled value of good health is celebrated on World Health Day. Spearheaded by the WHO, physical, mental, and emotional well-being is promoted and celebrated all over the world on this day.

Malaysia is considered an unhealthy country as the number of people suffering from heart disease and obesity is high. One in every two people is obese and overweight, while one in four does not practice physical activity and only one in 20 maintain healthy eating.

Statistics showed that 3.6 million Malaysians are living with diabetes – the highest number in Asia – while 6.1 million Malaysians have hypertension.

Malaysia is also the most obese nation in Asia, with about half of its over 32 million population being overweight or obese.

Diabetes is a serious public health concern. Globally there is a rising trend in the prevalence of diabetes due to many factors such as population growth, ageing, urbanisation and increasing prevalence of obesity and physical inactivity.

According to the 2019 National Health and Morbidity Survey, the number of pre-diabetes cases has jumped from 8.8 per cent in 2015 to 23.6 per cent in 2019. The number represents almost a quarter of the population who has yet to become diabetic but will become so if nothing drastic is done to reverse the trend.

The diabetes prevalence rate in Malaysia has risen much faster than expected, almost doubling in magnitude over the last decade. Diabetes has not only taken a toll on the resources, as it is a costly disease for the nation but also on the limbs and eyesight of its sufferers.

According to official statistics, half a million adults suffer from depression.

Unhealthy eating habits, increased stress levels, sedentary lifestyle and smoking – largely as a result of hectic work schedules – predispose young parents to high cholesterol and other non-communicable chronic diseases (NCDs).

That scenario is even more evident now as the country continues to grapple with heart disease being the leading cause of death in the country.

The onset of heart disease in Malaysia among the young is highest compared to other countries in the Southeast Asian region.

Highlighting the long-term implications of an unhealthy diet, health experts have warned that the vicious cycle of poor cholesterol management may lead from one generation to another.

Consumers are advised to review their diet, control their weight, increase physical activity and avoid using tobacco products.

Where food is concerned CAP advises consumers to:

- Reduce oily, deep-fried foods and foods that are high in salt.
- Reduce the amount of snacking, and instead choose healthier options such as fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Reduce the consumption of carbonated and sugary drinks
- Keep processed meats and fast foods to a minimum.

In view of the appalling health status of Malaysians, CAP calls on the government to:

- Ban vending machines in schools, hospitals and other public places.
- Educate Malaysians on the dangers of obesity and diabetes.
- Unhealthy foods that are high in fats, sugar, salt and additives should be discouraged by the introduction of taxes on such foods.
- Provide adequate recreational amenities in all residential areas.
- Make it compulsory for food manufacturers to label the amount of sodium on the labels.
- Mandate clear labelling on the fat content of all foods, including fast foods.
- Run an education campaign for parents and children on the dangers of obesity and diabetes.

**Mohideen Abdul Kader**  
**President**  
**Consumers Association of Penang**