

Baby among three new flu deaths

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KUALA LUMPUR: Three more people including a baby and a child died of Influenza A (H1N1), bringing the death toll to 18.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai said the 16-month-old baby girl had fever, cough and runny nose for a week before she was admitted to hospital last Sunday.

He said the baby died of severe pneumonia with underlying A (H1N1) infection at Sultanah Aminah Hospital in Johor Baru on Friday.

A five-year-old boy with upper respiratory tract infection, died of encephalitis secondary to A (H1N1) at Tengku Ampuan Afzan Hospital in Kuantan on Friday, said Liow.

He said the other flu-hit victim was a 63-year-old asthmatic patient who died of severe pneumonia and underlying pulmonary tuberculosis.

"He had fever, runny nose and cough for five days before being admitted to Selayang Hospital last Sunday."

Liow said the country also recorded 53 new cases, bringing the total to 1,578.

"There are still 64 people warded at the hospital including two babies, two obese persons and a post-delivery mother in the high-risk group."

Liow has urged the public to practise good hygiene, avoid crowded places and shun big events.

However, he said the Merdeka celebrations at Bukit Jalil National Stadium this month would be held as planned for now.


"We will screen everyone including participants of the parade and the public before they enter the stadium,"

HIGH-RISK GROUP

Those in the high-risk group with symptoms of the influenza-like illnesses (ILI) should get assessed immediately (preferably within two days of onset of the ILI) by ANY doctor either in a government or private hospital/clinic. The ILI is defined as a sudden onset of fever with temperature > 38°C, cough and sore throat, in the absence of other diagnosis.

Those considered to be in the high-risk group category include:

- > Children younger than five years old
- > Persons aged 65 years and older
- > Children and adolescents (< 18 years) on long-term aspirin therapy
- > Pregnant women
- > Adults and children with asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, organ failure, obesity, cardiovascular disease and hepatic, haematological, neurologic, neuromuscular or metabolic disorders such as Diabetes Mellitus
- > Adults and children who suffer from immuno deficiency disorders
- > Residents of nursing homes and other chronic care facilities



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Source: Ministry of Health (MOH). For more information, log on to www.h1n1.moh.gov.my

he said.

He also called for private medical practitioners to give out masks to flu and cough patients as part of their treatment.

"The vaccine will only arrive by the end of the year. For now, we must prevent the flu from spread-

ing," he told a press conference after opening the Japan Clinic at HSC Medical Centre here yesterday.

Liow also urged local doctors to be more competitive following health-care liberalisation.

The liberalisation, which is taking place in stages, enables foreign com-

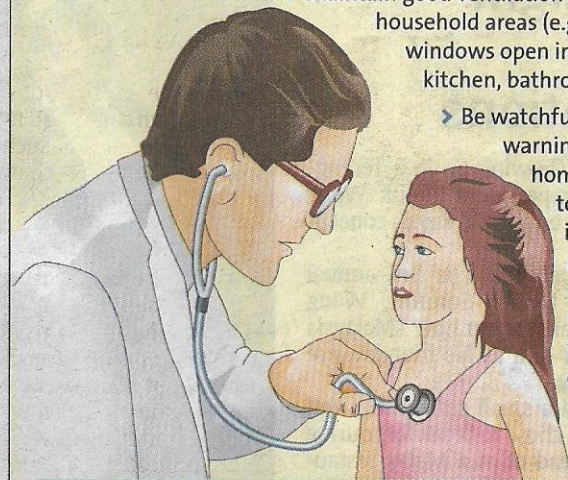
CARE AT HOME

If you have influenza-like illnesses (ILI) practise self-quarantine at home.

- > If you have fever, take paracetamol at standard recommended doses.
- > Get adequate rest. Bed rest makes you better.
- > Drink plenty of fluids (such as water, broth, sports drinks, juice, soup) to avoid dehydration.

> Maintain good ventilation in shared household areas (e.g., keeping windows open in restrooms, kitchen, bathroom, etc.).

> Be watchful for emergency warning signs (refer to home monitoring tool*) that will indicate when you need to seek medical attention. Seek treatment from ANY doctor either in a government or private hospital/clinic.



Home Monitoring Tool – Signs & symptoms of moderate to severe influenza

1. Respiratory difficulty: Shortness of breath, rapid breathing or purple or blue discoloration of lips.
2. Coughing out blood or blood-streaked sputum.
3. Persistent chest pains.
4. Persistent diarrhoea and/or vomiting.
5. Fever persisting beyond three days or recurring after three days.
6. Abnormal behaviour, confusion, less responsive, convulsion.
7. Dizziness when standing and/ or reduced urine production.

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Source: Ministry of Health (MOH). For more information, log on to www.h1n1.moh.gov.my

panies to open hospitals and foreign doctors to work in the country.

Liow said the ministry has so far opened up five sectors.

See Nation N6

Mask prices surge as demand soars