

Go easy on sugar, Malaysians warned

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KUALA LUMPUR: About 60 per cent of Malaysians above 18 are overweight and the trend is fast catching up among children as the food industry reports a jump in sugar consumption over the past five years.

Figures released by the Health Ministry yesterday also reveal that sugar intake among Malaysians is now above World Health Organisation recommendations.

Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai said sugar intake through food and drinks should not exceed seven teaspoons a day.

"But we take 10 teaspoons of sugar in our drinks a day, not including the kuih and desserts.

"To burn off even one teaspoon of sugar, a person needs to climb a 14-storey building," he said after launching a "reduce sugar consumption" campaign here yesterday with the theme "Stop at one! Less is better".

He hoped Malaysians would take less sugar in their *teh tarik* and *kopi tarik* or opt for warm water in the morning.

Sugar does not contain any nutritional value other than calories. It triggers health problems, including hypertension, diabetes and cancer.

Health Ministry records also show that about 30 per cent of children are obese and this has a direct link with reports from dent-

Students to be told of dangers

KUALA LUMPUR: The "reduce sugar consumption" campaign began yesterday and will go on for six months.

The aim is to get Malaysians to put less sugar in their food and drinks and to encourage them to opt for less sugar and sugar products.

The campaign will be held in schools to inform students of the dangers of sweetened food, desserts and drinks.

At the district level, the Health Department will hold talks and provide reading materials to create awareness among housewives of the dangers of excessive sugar intake.

ists who see higher tooth decay among them.

The ministry is now having discussions with representatives of the local food industry to provide more low-sugar and sugar-free food and drinks.