

PRIME NEWS

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Zika patient in Sg Buloh Hospital

ALERT: Woman, 58, had fever, rash after visiting daughter in Singapore

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A WOMAN from Klang has been confirmed to be Malaysia's first reported case of Zika infection.

The 58-year-old woman is currently undergoing treatment at Sungai Buloh Hospital.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam said the woman, a resident of Bandar Botanic, Klang, had visited her daughter in Singapore on Aug 19 and returned to Malaysia on Aug 21.

He said she had a fever and developed a rash one week later.

Her daughter, who works in Singapore and lives in Paya Lebar, has also been infected, he said.

Bernama reported yesterday that six Malaysians in Singapore had been infected with Zika.



A National Environmental Agency officer and a pest control worker visiting a flat for inspection at a public residential estate in the Bedok North area of Singapore yesterday. AFP pic

She sought medical attention at a private clinic in Klang on Aug 30. The patient was then referred to Sungai Buloh Hospital.

"The result of the urine PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test on Aug 31 showed that she tested positive for Zika virus," he told a press conference here yesterday.

Dr Subramaniam said the source of infection was suspected to have come from Singapore, as the woman had experienced signs of Zika infection on the same day as her daughter.

"The patient's husband and family members, who live in the same house with her, have yet to show any symptoms of Zika infection.

"From Aug 21 to Aug 28, when the patient had returned from Singapore, she had visited several areas in

Klang and Kuala Lumpur."

Dr Subramaniam said the government's priority was to control the mosquito population and that they had intensified vector-control activities in Bandar Botanic.

He urged residents in the area to allow the authorities to enter their homes and carry out fogging and larvicidal spraying.

"Close contacts with the patient will also be examined whether they have any fever or other Zika symptoms. We have also advised the authorities at the Johor-Singapore Causeway to spray mosquito repellent in all vehicles entering the country.

"There are some 200,000 Malaysians working in Singapore. They are advised to use mosquito repellent,

wear long-sleeve shirts and long pants to avoid mosquito bites."

He said that from Aug 27 to Aug 31, there have been 115 confirmed Zika cases in Singapore.

Because of the rapid spread of Zika infection, Dr Subramaniam said monitoring and preventive activities against Aedes mosquitoes would be intensified in all states, especially Johor and Selangor.

"Malaysians must focus on cleaning Aedes breeding places, protect themselves from Aedes mosquito bites and seek early medical attention if they have a fever, rash and conjunctivitis."

Dr Subramaniam called on people who had visited countries that have reported Zika infections to come forward to seek immediate medical at-

tention if they experienced any symptoms. There are 16 government medical centres, besides private laboratories, with facilities to detect the Zika virus.

Dr Subramaniam said the Zika virus could spread via sexual activities, where an infected person would carry the virus in his or her body for a certain period — men would have the virus in them for six months and women for two months.

"Those with the virus in the body can spread the virus to another person via sex. Have protected sex or abstain from sexual activities during the period. Pregnant women or those planning to get pregnant with any concern of Zika should seek advice from their doctors."

The Zika virus swept the globe since late last year, with the bulk of the infections occurring in South America, especially Brazil.

Scientists said a Zika infection by itself was rarely fatal, but some pregnant women with the virus had given birth to babies with small heads, a condition called microcephaly.

There was also a strong link between Zika infection and Guillain-Barre syndrome, an autoimmune disorder in which the body attacks itself in the aftermath of an infection, typically occurring in the days following an illness.

Malaysia's first reported Zika case came on the heels of Singapore confirming its first local transmission of the virus in a Malaysian woman living and working in the island state on Aug 27. The woman had not travelled to Zika-affected areas.

In May, Singapore reported its first Zika case in a man who was infected in Brazil. As of yesterday, two pregnant women in Singapore have been confirmed to be infected with Zika.

Take precautions, advises PM

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Najib Razak has advised everyone to take precautionary measures following the first case of the Zika virus reported in the country yesterday.

"For the moment, everyone is advised to take precautionary measures and follow the advice of the Health Ministry," he said in his latest Facebook and Twitter entry today.

He said that if anyone had the symptoms of Zika, such as having a headache, conjunctivitis, mild fever, skin rashes and joint pains, they should immediately go to the nearest health clinic or hospital for treatment.

"The government is now monitoring the status of Zika in Malaysia," he said.

The Health Ministry yesterday confirmed that a 58-year-old woman residing at Bandar Botanic, Klang, tested positive for the Zika virus.

She was suspected of having contracted the disease when visiting Singapore. **Bernama**



A Johor Baru-Singapore taxi driver spraying mosquito repellent into his vehicle at the Larkin Bus Terminal yesterday. Pic by Zulkarnain Ahmad Tajuddin

Page 1 pic: Klang Health Department Vector Unit personnel fogging the residential area in Bandar Botanic, Klang, yesterday.