



Children at a kindergarten in Selangor. The Health Ministry has urged all childcare centres to maintain cleanliness to prevent Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease outbreaks. FILE PIC

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MILD SYMPTOMS

# 5 HFMD OUTBREAKS AT KEDAH NURSERIES

Cases breach 4,000-  
mark as premises  
ordered to shut

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**F**IVE Hand Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD) outbreaks were reported at childcare centres in Kedah, taking the tally of infections in the state past 4,000.

State Health and Local Government Committee chairman Datuk Dr Mohd Hayati Othman said all affected premises had been shut under the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act 1988.

“HFMD cases in Kedah in 2022 (up to June 4) rose to 4,192. This is a record high, which is 429 per cent more than the same period in 2019, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic,” he said yesterday.

Dr Hayati said the 789 HFMD cases reported during the 22nd epidemiology week (EW22), between May 29 and June 4, was a decrease of 33 per cent compared with the week before.

“Most of the cases were reported in four districts. Kuala Muda had the most cases at 946, followed by Kubang Pasu with 625, Kulim with 588 and Kota Setar with 446.

“All of these cases displayed mild symptoms and received outpatient treatment. No cases had severe complications or required intensive treatment.”

Since early this year, 50 HFMD outbreaks have been reported in Kedah, with 49 of them at childcare centres.

In Kuala Lumpur, Health director-general Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said 82,846 HFMD cases had been recorded so far this year.

Dr Noor Hisham said this was a 32-fold increase compared with the 2,485 cases in the same period, last year, and a 1.7-fold increase compared with the 30,489 cases reported two years ago.

However, he said, the number of HFMD cases appeared to be declining.

During EW22, 16,954 cases were reported, which is a 9.3 per cent decrease from the previous week’s 18,688 cases.

“As of June 4, there were 23,305 cases reported in Selangor, followed by Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya with 9,540 cases, Perak with 8,032, Kelantan with 5,782 and Johor with 5,234,” he said in a statement.

Dr Noor Hisham said 74,841 HFMD cases were detected among children aged 6 and below; 6,520 cases involved those between 7 and 12, and 1,485 cases aged above 12.

Dr Noor Hisham said three HFMD cases were admitted to Intensive Care Units (ICU).

“Two cases were referred to the ICU due to inflammation of the brain (encephalitis) and are still being monitored.

“The third case has recovered and was discharged on May 31,” he said.

He said states or territories with the most outbreaks were Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya with 562, Selangor with 208 and Sarawak with 206.

Up to June 4, Dr Noor Hisham said 31,621 premises had been inspected for HFMD cases.

Penang reported 3,990 HFMD cases up to EW22 — a 22-fold increase from last year’s 176.

There were 1,727 HFMD cases in 2019.

Penang Health Committee chairman Dr Norlela Ariffin said the Southwest district recorded the highest number of cases at 988, followed by Seberang Prai Tengah with 867, Seberang Prai Utara with 826, Northeast district with 786 and Seberang Prai Selatan with 523.

“As of EW 22, 119 clusters were reported, which is a 16-fold increase from the same period last year. Most of the cases involved 6-year-olds, with 3,357 cases. There were 377 cases in older children, aged between 7 and 12, and 256 among those above 12,” she said.

Dr Norlela said the Health Ministry advised all childcare centres to ensure cleanliness and conduct screenings at the entrance.