

'Colorectal cancer on the rise here with fast lifestyle'

By **Cindy Lai**
reporters@theborneopost.com

MIRI: Various factors contribute to the rising cases of colorectal cancer amongst male and female Singaporeans and Malaysians.

According to colorectal surgery specialist Dr Quah Hak Mien, a heavy smoking habit, less exercise, and an all-meat diet are named as factors relating to colorectal cancer.

"Even though we have yet to obtain 100 per cent evidence that these could be related, however, based on the record of patients, there is a possibility," he told a press conference yesterday.

For years, he said, colorectal cancer is often found and diagnosed among Westerners including in United States and Britain.

"However, Singapore has been developed way too fast in recent years. The high pace of living of its people, means they are always 'on the go'. Ready-made food, preserved food etc, are the fastest and easiest. Hence, we suspect that it could have been a contributing factor.

"Based on the analysis of the patients, Chinese aged between 60 to 70-years-old are the largest group. Malay and Indian comes second and third," he said, adding that Malaysia is slowly catching up in numbers.

Even so, he said, it is never too late to start practising a healthy lifestyle.

"Spend plenty of time to exercise, consume more vegetables, eat less red meat and preserved food as well as drink more water," he said.

Meanwhile, Oncologist Dr Foo Kian Fong added that it is advisable for men and women aged 50 years and above to undergo colonoscopy cancer



CanHOPE Area manager-counsellor Connie Tan Lee Choo (seated left), Dr Ho, Dr Quah, Dr Fong, Administrative assistant Teo Chui Hung (seated right), Parkway Hospitals Marketing manager Ken (back left) and Parkway Cancer Centre Marketing manager Max Tan (back right).

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— Dr Quah Hak Mien, colorectal surgery specialist

screening as early prevention or detection for colorectal cancer.

He said early detection, such as diagnosis of cancer cells ranging from Stage 1 to Stage 3, could still save lives through treatment.

"Often, people only seek treatment when they are very ill. The delay in treatment might only make the situation worse,"

he said.

Quah and Foo were here in Miri yesterday on a CME Doctor's Networking CanHOPE East Malaysia seminar which was held on Saturday evening at a local hotel here.

Organised by CanHOPE, the key speakers included colorectal surgery specialist Dr Quah Hak Mien, oncologist Dr Foo Kian

Fong and urologist Dr Ho Siev Hong.

CanHOPE is a non-profit cancer counselling and support service initiated by Parkway Cancer Centre (Singapore), offering a wide range of resources and information about cancer in helping patients and their caregivers to make effective, informed decisions in their treatment journey.

The seminar held at Imperial Palace Hotel saw 25 medical practitioners from private and government medical institutions attending the annual event.