

A threat of dengue fever in malaysia

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Dengue is a rapid emerging viral disease prevalent worldwide. Dengue affects more affluent neighbourhoods in tropical and subtropical countries while thriving in urban poor areas, suburbs and the countryside at the same time. Dengue is a mosquito-borne viral infection triggering an alarming flu-like illness and, sometimes causing a possibly fatal issue called severe dengue. The occurrence of dengue has escalated 30-fold in the time frame of 50 years. Up to 50-100 million infections are now approximated to chance yearly in over 100 endemic countries, positioning nearly half of the world's population at risk. Mild symptoms often make people mistake dengue virus for the flu or other common viral infections. These mild symptoms are caused by mosquito-borne pathogens leading to a spectrum of major illnesses ranging from mild fever to hemorrhagic fever and shock syndrome. As stated earlier, dengue fever has no cure.

In Malaysia, dengue is perceived as a highly contagious health threat with the escalating trend of infection. The lack of a vaccine or suitable drug has driven the public's reliance on traditional remedies that are mostly not scientifically proven (" Current perspectives on dengue episode in Malaysia," 2016). Common practices include decoction of Tawa Tawa leaves, bitter gourd, and preparation of papaya leaves. Caution must be considered as over-dosage of certain plant extracts may be toxic. Under such circumstances, the only available option to curb the disease relies on vector control programmes. The inattentive behaviour of Malaysians in maintaining good sanitation and reliance on health authority are community challenges that need serious attention; this possibly can be overcome upon adopting the Communication for Behavioural Impact (COMBI) approach by World

Health Organization (“ Aedes Mosquitoes Resistance in Urban Community Setting,” 2012). Research Since dengue has no definite cure, prevention is crucial in maintaining the health and safety of individuals. Affordable prevention methods will greatly benefit families, especially of low incomes. This is due to the option and availability to be less prone to dengue, which may not have been obtainable previously. The awareness would vastly assist the world’s population, not just Malaysia. Individuals who are not aware of the existence of dengue are more likely to get infected as a result of ignorance. Therefore, if awareness were to be raised, many would be more educated and precautious when dealing with issues pertaining to such viruses. Furthermore, information would easily be spread through conversations, media and advertising, once the fatality of the virus is recognised. Hence, impacting many parts of the world instead of Malaysia solely.