

Repeat Covid-19 self-test after third, fifth day of developing symptoms

By Adie Zulkifli - March 18, 2022



Kedah Health director Dr Othman Warijo said it was crucial for people who developed any or more than one of the Covid-19 symptoms to repeat the test using the Antigen Rapid Test Kit (RTK-Ag) on the third and the fifth days. - NSTP/SAIFULLIZAN TAMADI.

ALOR STAR: With rising Covid-19 deaths among those who did not receive booster shots in Kedah, those who develop early Covid-19 symptoms should repeat their self-test after the third and fifth days.

On Tuesday, Kedah recorded 28 deaths, the highest daily fatalities figure since the Omicron variant hit the country early this year, with Brought-In-Dead (BID) cases recording a steady climb.

Kedah Health director Dr Othman Warijo said it was crucial for people who developed any or more than one of the Covid-19 symptoms to repeat the test using the Antigen Rapid Test Kit (RTK-Ag) on the third and the fifth days.

"For the test to turn positive, it requires adequate presence of the virus colony in one's body," he told the New Straits Times.

Hence, Dr Othman said it was crucial for people to repeat their self-test between the third and fifth days after developing early symptoms of infection.

"If it is positive, report to MySejahtera and undergo self-quarantine immediately to avoid spreading the virus to others.

"Contact the Covid-19 Assessment Centre (CAC) if the symptoms gets worse," he said.

Based on data available on the Health Ministry's CovidNow portal, no cluster-related transmission was detected in the state over the past two weeks.

This is despite Kedah steadily recording over 2,000 new daily cases since last month, with 149 deaths in the past two weeks - among the highest death rates in the country.

This means Kedah's new Covid-19 transmissions are now totally sporadic, where people do not just get infected by being close contact to positive cases.

That should explain why a majority of the death cases were victims who were unaware that they had been infected with the virus.

State Health Committee Chairman Datuk Dr Mohd Hayati Othman said BID cases in Kedah were on the rise, with 65 cases reported between Jan 1 until March 12.

"A total 86.2 per cent of the 65 deaths were individuals who have yet to receive their booster shots despite completing their vaccination doses.

"About 90 per cent of those who died from Covid-19 were unaware they had contracted the virus," he said.

Dr Hayati urged those who develop fever, flu, sore throat or other related symptoms to take the RTK-Ag test.

"I hope the people will not take this matter lightly, as declining to take the test after developing symptoms could lead to death," he said.

With just 700,000 or 32 per cent of the eligible adult population having taken the booster shot, Dr Hayati acknowledged that the take up was very slow, particularly among the Malays.

"I am not sure why... Perhaps some of them believe false information being spread via social media," he said.

To enhance awareness on the importance of getting booster shots, Dr Hayati said the state government would be working with mosque committees.

"We will be discussing with the state Mufti Office and the Kedah Islamic Religious Council to encourage mosque congregants to take up the booster shots," he said.