

Majority of ovarian cancer cases in Malaysia detected at stage 3 or above

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Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said it was a problem that needed to be looked into and there was a need for early detection through better screening. - NSTP/MOHAMAD SHAHRIL BADRI SAALI

PETALING JAYA: More than 80 per cent of ovarian cancer cases in Malaysia are only detected at stage 3 or above.

Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said it was a problem that needed to be looked into and there was a need for early detection through better screening.

"That is unfortunately not too reliable right now, even in other countries.

"The best is to create awareness of early signs before we get a more effective screening method for ovarian cancer," he said at a press conference today.

He urged women to look out for ovarian cancer risk factors such as advanced age, family history, obesity, weight loss, bloated stomach and pelvic pain.

Pantai Hospital Cheras consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist Dr Ida Lilywaty Md Latar said there is no reliable screening method for ovarian cancer to ensure early detection and prevention.

She said this resulted in late presentation in the majority of cases.

"More than 80 per cent of ovarian cancer cases are detected at stage 3 and above for the first time.

"Unlike cervical and breast cancer, which are relatively preventable with early detection through reliable screening methods like a pap smear and mammogram, respectively, screening for ovarian cancer is generally not reliable and not widely available, making early diagnosis difficult and challenging."

On Saturday, artiste Adibah Noor died of stage 4 ovarian cancer at the Gleneagles Hospital in Ampang. She was 51.