

Headline	HIV risk in fish therapy		
MediaTitle	Daily Express (KK)		
Date	11 Nov 2011	Color	Full Color
Section	Nation	Circulation	30,557
Page No	10	Readership	97,836
Language	English	ArticleSize	165 cm ²
Journalist	N/A	AdValue	RM 850
Frequency	Daily (EM)	PR Value	RM 2,550



HIV risk in fish therapy

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PAPAR: People been told to be aware of the risk of getting HIV and other contagious diseases through fish spa therapy and related treatments.

"The Health Ministry has issued a statement which deems fish therapy as unsafe due to the risk of spreading diseases such as HIV," said Deputy Health Minister, Datuk Rosnah Shirlin.

"This is because fish therapy uses the same fish for every customer, this could cause risk of HIV spreading through blood, saliva or open wounds in the body.

"This therapy uses small fishes which will nibble on dead skin cells which can cause the spread of diseases from one person to another or even by sharing the same water with others.

"There is also the risk of getting Hepatitis A, B and C through the same way," said Rosnah at an Aidiladha gathering at the Al-Azim Surau Kampung Sri Tanjung, here.

Rosnah said the problem could be avoided if the fish spa business operators take safety precautions such as using new batches of fish for every treatment.

"The pond for this therapy should be also be used by only one customer instead of sharing it with someone else," said Rosnah.

"From an economic point of view, taking safety precautions may not profit business operators but they have to do it because it's the only way to avoid the risks involved."

Rosnah said there is no scientific proof that fish therapy has medical benefits.

"There is no solid proof that this therapy has any medical benefits, but it has higher risks compared to health benefits."

She said her Ministry can only issue statements and advice the public on the matter adding that only the local authorities have the authority to close down a fish spa premise.



No scientific proof that fish therapy has health benefits.