

Binge drinking serious problem in Sabah – UMS study

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KOTA KINABALU: Binge drinking is a serious problem in Sabah, according to a research done by Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS).

The university's senior lecturer in psychiatry, Dr Wendy Shoesmith, pointed out that binge drinking affects mainly men between the ages of 20 and in their 30s.

And binge drinking has been blamed for accidents, heart attacks, strokes, domestic violence, social ills and neglected family and children.

"It is advisable for someone who have drank, even a little bit of alcohol, to not drive because it affects their response," she said after a seminar on alcoholism here

yesterday.

During the interview, Dr Wendy also mentioned the problems associated with drinking and alcoholism.

"Domestic violence is the commonest form of violence by husbands who do not stop drinking," she said.

Additionally, family relationship also becomes strained when a man drinks too much, she said.

"The kids get neglected and they suffer. Even with no violence involved, it still affects the children growing up -- and children with a father struggling with drinking issues are prone and run the risk of falling into that same addiction," she said, adding that some addiction

also runs in families.

The lecturer also mentioned that she had met women who asked their doctor to help their husband get rid of their addiction.

"We have some techniques (to get the men to stop drinking) but it is quite tough to get people to change when they are not motivated. It (the success) is dependent on them.

"Most addicts also deny they have a drinking problem and those who actually acknowledge it as a problem usually have a hard time breaking off the habit."

"They stay off for a while, relapse and go around the whole cycle again. It usually takes a person eight cycles or more before they finally give up the addiction," she said.

Sabah among top three in alcohol consumption

KOTA KINABALU: Sabah recorded the third highest consumption of alcohol in Malaysia, at 18.4 per cent after Kuala Lumpur (20.3 per cent) and Sarawak (19.7 per cent).

State health principal assistant director (non-communicable diseases) Dr Nirmal Kaur said the statistics were based on a National Health and Morbidity Survey carried out between August 2011 and July 2012.

She said alcohol was present in most of the traditional food and drinks and a favourite among 95 per cent of the indigenous community in the 20 to 60 age-group.

"According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), alcohol consumption should not exceed two glasses to avoid non-communicable diseases.

"A glass of alcohol is equivalent to one can of beer, 70ml of 'montoku' (a traditional drink of the Kadazandusun community), 100ml of 'tapai' or 40ml of whisky or brandy," she told reporters after a health-related seminar here yesterday.

Dr Nirmal said habitual consumption of alcohol in excessive amounts could lead to heart attack, diabetes, stroke, cancer and liver damage. - Bernama