



For Immediate Release/27th May 2016

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Do you have morning blood pressure surge?

In conjunction with World Hypertension Day, Pfizer Malaysia, Malaysian Society of Hypertension (MSH) and National Stroke Association of Malaysia (NASAM) launches 'The Morning Hype' campaign – calling for Malaysians to check their blood pressure in the morning.

KUALA LUMPUR, 27th May 2016 – Pfizer Malaysia in partnership with Malaysian Society of Hypertension (MSH) and National Stroke Association of Malaysia (NASAM) today launched 'The Morning Hype' campaign. In conjunction with World Hypertension Day, the campaign is aimed at creating disease awareness on the linkage between morning blood pressure surge and stroke.

While it is a physiological phenomenon for the body to have a rise in pressure in the morning, having an exaggerated morning blood pressure surge of more than 135/85 mmHG¹ heightens the risks of triggering serious stroke events². Morning blood pressure surge usually takes place between 6:00am to noon³. A sharp rise in blood pressure during this time can lead to cardiovascular (CV) events such as stroke and sudden death.⁴ In fact, morning blood pressure surge is a strong independent predictor for clinical stroke events.⁵

'The Morning Hype' campaign will host exciting programmes to raise greater awareness on the importance of having a 24-hour blood pressure control through regular blood pressure checks. The campaign also focuses on educating hypertensive patients and the public at large on the importance of starting the day right by checking their blood pressure in the morning.

"Following the 38th Annual Meeting of the Japanese Society of Hypertension last year, medical experts have revealed that there is a lack in awareness in

¹ Lee et al.. (2011). Morning Hypertension in Treated Hypertensives: Baseline Characteristics and Clinical Implications. Korean Circulation Journal, 41(12), 733-743. Retrieved 17 May, 2016, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/221761278_Morning_Hypertension_in_Treated_Hypertensives_Baseline_Characteristics_and_Clinical_Implications.

² Kario, K. (2010). Morning Surge in Blood Pressure and Cardiovascular Risk: Evidence and Perspectives. Hypertension, 56, 765-773. Retrieved 14 May, 2016, from <http://hyper.ahajournals.org/>.

³ Muller et al.. (1985). Circadian Variation In The Frequency Of Onset Of Acute Myocardial Infarction. The New England Journal of Medicine, 313(21), 1315-1322.

⁴ White, W.B. (2007). Clinical Assessment of Early Morning Blood Pressure in Patients With Hypertension. Preventive Cardiology, Fall, 210-214.

⁵ Kario et al.. (2006). Morning Hypertension: The Strongest Independent Risk Factor for Stroke in Elderly Hypertensive Patients. Hypertens Res, 29(8), 581-587.

monitoring and managing morning blood pressure surge amongst Asians. There have been numerous clinical trials which have established morning blood pressure surge and the consequences of morning peaks to events such as stroke.^{4,5,6} As such, the coalition of experts have developed a consensus in recognising and managing morning blood pressure, which is often a neglected aspect of hypertension⁶,” said Dr. Gayatri Gunasagaran, Senior Product Physician, Pfizer Malaysia.

“This sparks a crucial need to educate Malaysians on morning blood pressure surge and its correlation to stroke events. The first step in managing morning blood pressure surge is through regular home blood pressure monitoring, particularly in the morning, which is currently left to one’s desire. ‘The Morning Hype’ campaign plays an important role to address this issue by empowering patients to be more involved in their blood pressure management,” she added.

Hypertension, also known as high blood pressure, is a silent disease that has increasingly become an important medical and public health issue not only globally but in Malaysia as well. It accounts to over 970 million people suffering from this lifestyle disease worldwide.⁷ In Malaysia, the prevalence of hypertension in adults above the ages of 18 is on the rise accounting to about 30%.⁸ More alarmingly, for every two hypertensive patients, there are three patients who are in fact unaware of having hypertension.⁸

Echoing this, the campaign efforts are aligned with the Ministry of Health’s plans to meet the national targets for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) prevention and control for year 2025.⁸ The initiatives are in support of the national aim which is to reduce the prevalence of hypertension to less than 24% across the nation.⁸

Present at the launch was Professor Datin Dr. Chia Yook Chin, President of Malaysian Society of Hypertension (MSH) who shared, “While many may be aware of hypertension, morning blood pressure surge is still relatively unheard of. Our blood pressure varies and fluctuates within a specific interval and at different times of the day.⁹ Morning blood pressure occurs when there is a spike in your blood pressure levels in the morning.¹ When blood pressure is left uncontrolled, it presents a risk factor for stroke and CV events.¹⁰”

She further explained, “Through this campaign, we want to inculcate the habit of regular blood pressure monitoring to optimise control. The best time to measure your morning blood pressure is within two hours after arising as this is when our morning blood pressure is at its peak.¹¹ It is also important for

⁶ Wang, J.G. (2015). The Pulse of Asia. Pulse, 3, 48-87.

⁷ World Heart Federation. (2016). World-heart-federation.org. Retrieved 17 May, 2016, from <http://www.world-heart-federation.org/cardiovascular-health/cardiovascular-disease-risk-factors/hypertension/>.

⁸ Institute for Public Health. (2015). National Health and Morbidity Survey 2015. (2 Ed.). Retrieved 17 May, 2016, from <http://www.iku.gov.my/images/IKU/Document/REPORT/nhmsreport2015vol2.pdf>.

⁹ Rau, N.R & Rao, G. (2012). Blood Pressure Variability: How to deal?. Medicine Update, 22, 117-121. Retrieved 19 May, 2016, from http://www.apiindia.org/pdf/medicine_update_2012/hypertension_03.pdf.

¹⁰ World Health Organization. (2013). A Global Brief on Hypertension: Silent killer, global public health crisis. Retrieved 19 May, 2016, from http://ish-world.com/downloads/pdf/global_brief_hypertension.pdf.

¹¹ Kario, K. (2015). Essential Manual of 24-Hour Blood Pressure Management from Morning to Nocturnal Hypertension.

those who are not hypertensive to check their blood pressure at least once a year. For those who are keen to learn more about the condition and its risks, we encourage them to speak to their healthcare professionals today.”

Speaking on morning blood pressure surge incidences leading to stroke events, Sylvia Chong, General Manager of National Stroke Association of Malaysia (NASAM) also shared, “Stroke strikes without warning and changes lives completely. It takes a toll on one’s quality of life because when someone has a stroke, he or she either dies or lives with disabilities for the rest of their lives. The patients in our centres will have to relearn skills lost through extensive rehabilitation such as speech, physical, occupational and recreational therapies, group activities and counselling.”

“Stroke is ranked as the second leading cause of death in Malaysia.¹² Despite this, many still assume that stroke happens only when you are 70 and above but we have seen stroke survivors as young as one-year old at our centres. The reality is that stroke does happen among the younger population. We have also observed that many stroke cases actually do take place in the mornings which is why preventive measures should start early especially among hypertensive patients to reduce the risks of having stroke,” she added.

‘The Morning Hype’ campaign targets to reach out to patients and community through on-ground activations, educational materials, free blood pressure check-ups and demonstrations as well as other initiatives involving healthcare practitioners and retails. These activities are designed with two goals in mind – to encourage the public to check their blood pressure regularly especially in the morning and checking it correctly.

Collaborating with community pharmacies, the campaign will host a series of blood pressure check booths to further educate the public. A specially designed ‘The Morning Hype’ mirror sticker will also be available at all participating pharmacies that functions as a tracker for daily blood pressure measurements.

As part of the campaign efforts to engage healthcare professionals, a Morning Symposium will be held to further shed light on morning blood pressure surge through the correct monitoring of blood pressure in achieving a 24-hour blood pressure control. The initiatives under ‘The Morning Hype’ campaign will be sustained across the next few months leading up to October coinciding with World Stroke Day.

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¹² Hoy, D. G., Rao, C., Hoa, N. P., Suhardi, S., & Lwin, A. M. M. (2013). Stroke mortality variations in South-East Asia: empirical evidence from the field. *International Journal of Stroke*, 8(A100), 21-27.

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