

FACTSHEET

General

- Worldwide tobacco kills about 5 million people annually. By 2020 the annual toll will rise to 10 million.
- Smoking is a major cause of cancers including lung, larynx (voice box), oral cavity, pharynx (throat), and oesophagus.
- It is a contributing cause in the development of cancers of the bladder, pancreas, liver, cervix, kidney, stomach, colon and rectum, and some leukaemias; it is also the source of cardiovascular disease and reproductive health problems.
- Passive smoking causes lung cancer, chronic respiratory disease, heart disease and stroke in adults as well as asthma, lower respiratory tract illnesses, reduced lung growth and function and middle-ear infections in children.
- Smokeless tobacco causes head and neck cancer.

Malaysia

- In Malaysia lung cancer is the main cause of cancer deaths and 90% of lung cancer cases are linked to cigarette smoking.
- Cigarette smoking accounts for about 25% (or 1 in every 4) of all deaths in Malaysia.
- Smoking-related deaths are three out of five top killers in Malaysia.
- Smoking prevalence among male adults in Malaysia had reached 50%, more than the figure in other developing nations (49%) and developed nations (39%). Smoking among male teenagers had reached 30% of all smokers whereas smoking among teenage girls had reached 8% and was expected to surge to 29% by 2030.

Tobacco Control in Malaysia

- The objective of tobacco control legislation is to regulate all levels (from cultivation, production, marketing to the final consumer) of the industry primarily because: 1) nicotine in tobacco is highly addictive, 2) the dangerous chemical constituents in tobacco smoke, 3) the negative health impact on smokers and passive smokers.
- Nicotine is a 'gateway' drug to other hard drugs, e.g. marijuana, heroin and cocaine.
- Legislations are insufficient. It needs the support and involvement of all Malaysians to curb the nicotine addiction epidemic.
- Currently various governmental and non-governmental agencies have made some progress in tobacco control.
- Among the non-governmental agencies that are dedicated in tobacco control are:
 - 1) The **Clearinghouse for Tobacco Control (C-Tob)**, established in Oct 2001, based in National Poison Centre, Universiti Sains Malaysia.
 - 2) The **Malaysian Council for Tobacco Control (MCTC)**, established in Sept 2004. Objective: To integrate all supporting bodies into a single coordinating and representing force. MCTC represents by 28 organisations where 75 per cent of them are non-governmental bodies (inclusive consumer groups, institutions of higher learning and professional bodies).
 - 3) The **Research Network for Tobacco Control (RNTC)**, established in Sept 2004 as the research arm comprising of academicians.