

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT

NATIONAL HEALTH AND MORBIDITY SURVEY 2020 — HIV KNOWLEDGE

POOR HIV KNOWLEDGE AMONG YOUTH

ISSUE

HIV Prevention: Knowledge is Power!

Comprehensive knowledge about HIV/AIDS is the cornerstone for the prevention, control and treatment of HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS is one of the most pandemic spreading diseases worldwide. A United Nations report based on surveys from 60 countries indicated that more than 50% of young people aged 15 to 24 had serious misconceptions about how HIV/AIDS is transmitted [1].

The Malaysian Country Progress Report on HIV/AIDS 2019 also showed that only 50% of youths (15-24 years) correctly identify both ways of preventing the sexual transmission of HIV and reject major misconceptions about HIV transmission [2]

In line with the National Strategic Plan for ending AIDS 2016-2030 (NSPEA) [3], the NHMS 2020 included HIV Knowledge Module to provide nationally representative data on prevalence of HIV knowledge in Malaysia.

This research highlight is based on **NHMS 2020 : Communicable Diseases, Volume I**

Who is this publication for?

- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Communication & Multimedia
- Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development
- Ministry of Youth and Sport

Purpose of this summary

To share the findings of NHMS 2020 focusing on HIV knowledge among young people to further strengthen existing HIV education programs for the prevention of HIV/AIDS.

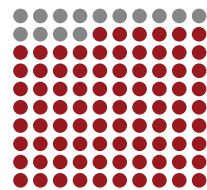


Institute for Public Health
National Institutes of Health (NIH)
1, Jalan Setia Murni U13/52
Seksyen U13, Setia Alam
40170 Shah Alam, Selangor

The Institute for Public Health is the Centre for Epidemiological Survey Research for the Ministry of Health.

www.iku.gov.my/nhms

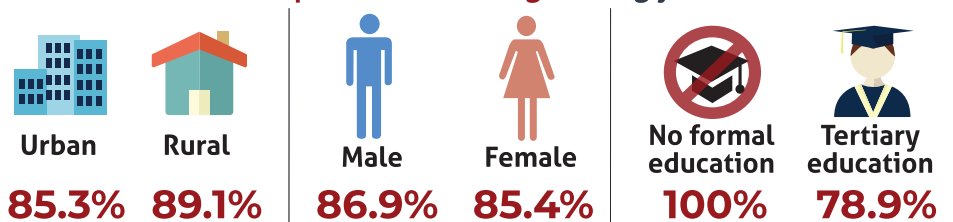
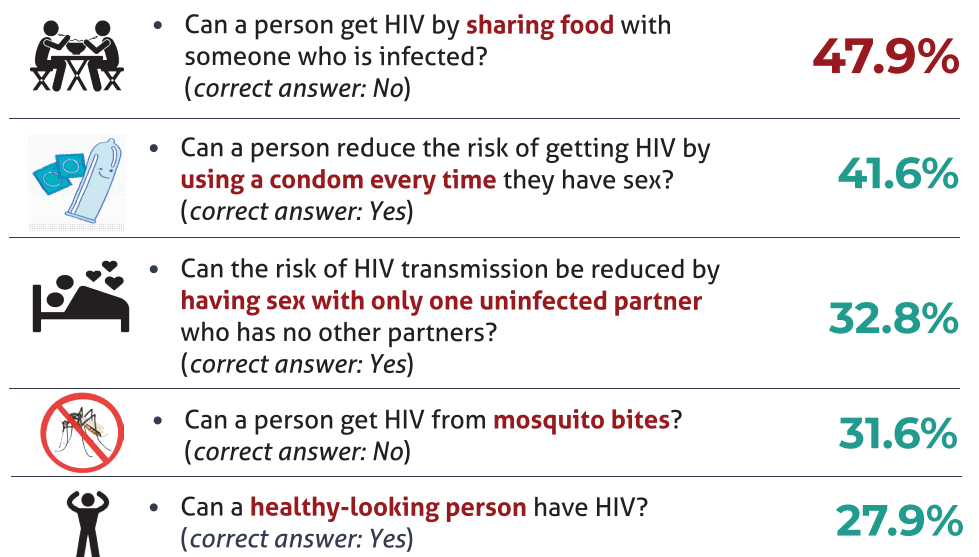
KEY MESSAGES



86%
aged 15-24 years
had inadequate
HIV knowledge*

* **Inadequate HIV knowledge** an incorrect answer to any 1 of the 5 questions based on the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) indicators

Inadequate HIV knowledge among youth:

Percentage of **incorrect answers** to the five UNGASS knowledge questions:

Almost 1 in 2 youths had a misconception that HIV can be transmitted via food sharing.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

For policy makers

- **Ministry of Education**
 - Expanding current HIV/AIDS education programs in schools such as Doktor Muda to be more inclusive and more student engagement.
 - Educating young population on transmission and prevention of HIV to dispel myths and misconceptions about HIV
- **Ministry of Communication & Multimedia, Ministry of Youth & Sport**
 - Diversification of information delivery platforms such as mobile web, website and social media, i.e., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tik-Tok, YouTube, for creating free and easily accessible web-based education, specifically targeted to the young population
- **Ministry of Health**
 - Incorporating HIV knowledge into existing health services in primary care (i.e., "Klinik Remaja") and hospitals
 - Interventional and follow-up surveys on the targeted population (rural, younger age, no formal education) as future evaluation

METHODS

We used data from the National Health & Morbidity Survey (NHMS) 2020 to focus on communicable diseases. The NHMS 2020 was a nationwide community-based cross-sectional study design using a multistage stratified random sampling method. The survey included respondents living in non-institutionalized living quarters from 113 enumeration blocks in Malaysia. Data were analysed in account for complex survey analysis to obtain population estimates. HIV knowledge was assessed using the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) indicators [4], which contain five questions on HIV prevention and transmission: 1) "Can the risk of HIV transmission be reduced by having sex with only one uninfected partner who has no other partners?" 2) "Can a person reduce the risk of getting HIV by using a condom every time they have sex?" 3) "Can a healthy-looking person have HIV?" 4) "Can a person get HIV from mosquito bites?" 5) "Can a person get HIV by sharing food with someone who is infected?" Respondents who gave an incorrect answer to any one of the five questions were considered to have inadequate HIV knowledge. The NHMS 2020 official report has further details on the methodology used.

REFERENCES

1. World Health Organization. Major UN study finds alarming lack of knowledge about HIV/AIDS among young people. In Major UN study finds alarming lack of knowledge about HIV/AIDS among young people 2002 (pp. 3-3)
2. HIV/STI/Hepatitis C Sector, Ministry of Health Malaysia. Country Progress Report on HIV/AIDS 2019 Malaysia. Available from: [https://www.moh.gov.my/moh/resources/Penerbitan/Laporan/Umum/Report_GAM_2019_\(Final\).pdf](https://www.moh.gov.my/moh/resources/Penerbitan/Laporan/Umum/Report_GAM_2019_(Final).pdf)
3. Ministry of Health Malaysia. National Strategic Plan for Ending AIDS: 2016–2030. Available from: http://vlib.moh.gov.my/cms/content.jsp?id=com.tms.cms.document.Document_f4ad1ba5-a0188549-d7eb9d00-8579b30f
4. Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). Monitoring the declaration of commitment on HIV/AIDS: Guidelines on construction of core indicators. Geneva, Switzerland, August 2002, 144 pp. Available from: <https://www.who.int/hiv/strategic/me/en/isbn9291732389.pdf>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank the Director General of Health Malaysia for permission to publish this document.

This document has been peer reviewed by:

Dr Noor Ani Ahmad, Dr Manimaran A/L Krishnan Kaundan, Dr Low Lee Lan and Dr Chai Phing Tze.

This summary should be cited as:

Mohd Hazrin Hasim@Hashim, Mohd Shaiful Azlan Kassim, Fazila Haryati Ahmad, Norhafizah Sahril, Chan Ying Ying, Chan Yee Mang, Nur Liana Majid, Syamlina Che Abdul Rahim, Mohd Ruhaizie Riyadz, Ahmad Ali Zainuddin, Mohamad Aznuddin Abd Razak, Anita Suleiman (2021). Research Highlight: **Poor HIV Knowledge Among Youth**. The National Health and Morbidity Survey 2020: Communicable Diseases. Institute for Public Health (IPH)

For further information and to provide feedback on this document please contact:
Mohd Hazrin bin Hashim
hazrin@moh.gov.my

Disclaimer

The views, interpretation, implications, conclusions and recommendations are those of the author alone and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the investigators participating in the project nor the views or policy of the Ministry of Health, Malaysia.

This research highlight is part of a collection from the NHMS 2020:

- 1) Are you at risk of Hepatitis B?
- 2) Hepatitis B: A healthy carrier among us!
- 3) Stigma towards people living with HIV
- 4) **Poor HIV knowledge among youth**
- 5) Ignoring TB-like symptoms in Malaysia
- 6) Antibiotic resistance: How doctors and pharmacist could help?
- 7) Are Malaysians forgetting about Malaria?
- 8) Search destroy the facts
- 9) Dog ownership in Malaysia: Licensing & vaccination practices
- 10) Dog bite injuries: Intention vs practise of good health seeking behaviour

Project reference number:

NMRR-19-867-47973

Funded by:



MINISTRY OF HEALTH MALAYSIA