

PM: Read newspapers daily

The Star - 16/12/2019 Pg. 2

Dr Mahathir recommends reading to keep the mind sharp

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad (*pic*) has advised Malaysians to read newspapers every day to help keep the minds active.

When talking or making speeches, the memory of words and phrases and their alternatives would spring to mind easily with regular reading, he said.

And if one does not read or seldom reads, the words do not come spontaneously when talking or making a speech.

"Reading newspapers every day also helps to keep the mind active and improves the capacity to form words and phrases.

"It is normal for an old person to remember incidents in the past than recent incidents, but even this can be improved with reading and talking," said Dr Mahathir.

The 94-year-old Prime Minister also answered the one question people have repeatedly asked him - his ability to function at his age.

"I feel obliged to explain about my experience even if it is not

based on scientific study. Frankly, I don't know how I am what I am.

"All I can say is that, I have been fortunate to not suffer the diseases that shorten one's life," Dr Mahathir said in his column published by the *New Sunday Times* yesterday under the heading "Here's my recipe for staying healthy".

He added he did have a heart attack 30 years ago but survived.

He points out that certainly many things are within one's control, and that "we should do our best to control ourselves so that we stay healthy and probably live to a ripe old age."

"Self-discipline or the ability to control what we can do in life is life-saving. We must always try to control our desires."

Good eating habits are Dr



Mahathir's first recipe to staying healthy, saying people should eat to live and not live to eat.

"The body really does not need a lot of food except when one is young and growing.

"For them, the food is needed to ensure good bodily growth. Still, the amount of food must not be more than what is needed.

"Obesity often follows overeating even among children and the young. And obesity is not good for health and longevity."

He says children grow fat because doting parents insist on them eating a lot of food, which they should not.

Instead, parents should teach their children to eat more fruits and vegetables, and less rice or carbohydrates and certainly less sugar.

Elaborating on obesity, which afflicts a very high percentage of

Malaysians, Dr Mahathir said the problem usually begins at the age of 40, as the tendency at that age is to eat as much tasty food as available and when food is tasty, more of it will be taken.

The stomach responds to the bigger intake by becoming bigger and when this happens, more food is needed to assuage the feeling of hunger. This results in weight gain while obesity is bad for health.

And with such a big body, the heart has to work harder to deliver blood and absorb food to the overweight body and to cope with the heavier work; the heart enlarges while the blood pressure goes up, bringing with it all kinds of related symptoms and diseases.

"So in order to avoid blood pressure diseases, eat less and don't grow fat. Besides the heart, the other organs of the body such as the liver, kidneys and pancreas will all be over-stressed.

"Any one of these organs may fail and shorten life," he said. — Bernama