

# The **Hearty** Digest

**SUNWAY**  
MEDICAL CENTRE®  
Sunway City

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Among Elderlies**

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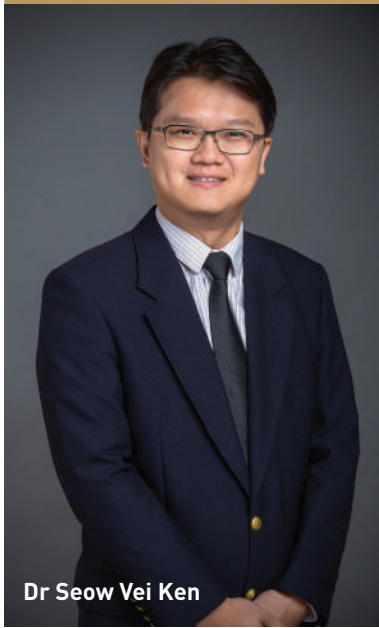
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FROM THE EDITOR

# Threading The Yarns Of Progress



In this edition of The Hearty Digest, we present to you a collection of inspiring stories, remarkable achievements, and the unwavering commitment of individuals as well as organisations alike. This is a testament to the progress Sunway Medical Centre, Sunway City (SMC) has made and the collective spirit that drives us to continue doing great work.

From momentous firsts **(1,000 robotic surgeries achieved)** to heartwarming community outreach **(Pesta Jom Sihat with SMC Eye Centre)**, and insightful medical information **(Blood Donation as Essential Lifesaver of Chronic Haematology Patients)** as shared by our dedicated consultants, we celebrate them all for making a positive impact in the lives of our people, the patients we care for, as well as the community beyond the threshold of this hospital.

The stories featured here hopefully become a roadmap to inspire and guide as we all strive to create a better and more healthy tomorrow. Let these pages serve as a reminder that the first step to a more wholesome life is knowing the signs and understanding that there is always hope when there is help.

“ Thank you so much for your unwavering support in our magazine and have a wonderful year-end celebration that is to come. Until then, take care and stay safe everyone!  
See you! ”

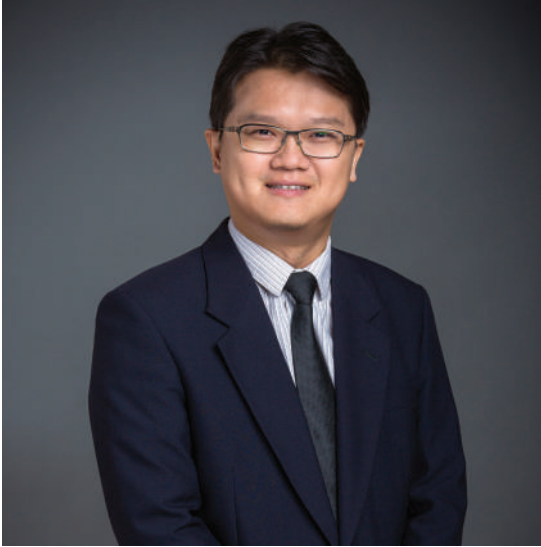


*Sulyn Chong*  
Editor, The Hearty Digest

**The Editorial Team**  
Corporate Communication  
Sunway Medical Centre, Sunway City

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

# Of Knowledge And Accomplishments



I am pleased to address you through these pages and I hope this message finds everyone in high spirits and good health. As we complete another productive quarter, let us look back at the past three months, which had brought many stories as a testament to our dedication and innovation of our hardworking team.

Just recently, SunMed Carnival was held at Tower D of SMC with over 1,900 people in attendance. It was a refreshing departure from the norm as it was an amalgamation of community members, healthcare professionals, and children of all ages. This shows that our hospital could be more than just a place for treatment – it can be a fun learning and knowledge-sharing hub.

Aside from that, we have embarked on a remarkable journey of unwavering commitment and relentless pursuit of excellence. Hence, I am proud that in the previous quarter, we hit a milestone of completing 1,000 da Vinci surgeries, and I would like to extend my gratitude to all the hard work of our ever-growing robotics family, comprising of surgeons, nurses, ground staffs and the Management team.

“

While we take pride in our accomplishments, we understand that the pursuit of knowledge to advance our medical provision and care to our patients should also be constant. In line with our spirit of progression, we were proud to organise a significant number of symposiums and health campaigns, including the SunMed Paediatric Symposium 2023, which garnered more than 4,200 participants, the 2nd Sunway Oncology and Palliative Symposium 2023, that saw more than 4,000 logins from 29 countries, and many more.

”

These platforms were the perfect place for our medical staff and various other healthcare professionals from the industry to gain valuable knowledge as well as encourage sharing of wisdom among peers and participants from the medical industry inside and outside of Malaysia. This in turn pushed forth a wave of advancements in terms of medical technology, optimising treatment options and offering better care to our patients.

As we continue to strive for improvements and accomplishments, I hope it will translate into better medical services, hospitality, and treatments to all. Thank you for your constant support in us and I will see you in the next issue.

*Dr Seow Vei Ken*

Chief Executive Officer  
Sunway Medical Centre, Sunway City

**DO YOU KNOW?**

# Understanding Neurosurgery

When someone is faced with the possibility of brain surgery, they tend to experience instinctual unease. Therefore, it is important to have a better understanding of brain tumours and available treatments so we can make informed decisions.

## Identifying Brain Tumours

Interventional pain specialist, neurosurgery and spine surgery expert at SMC, Dr Toh Charng Jeng emphasised the subtle nature of brain tumours and the potential difficulties in identifying them.

- It is common for older patients to miss signs of brain tumours as they generally have their attention slowed down and maybe talk less than before. Some may think this is just a part of dementia.
- We must rely on our loved ones to notice unusual or persistent changes in our attitudes and recommend medical consultations.
- Can range from being relatively benign to potentially life-threatening depending on its size, location and development.
- Patients must always consult a neurosurgeon before jumping to conclusions.



**Dr Toh Charng Jeng**  
 Interventional Pain Specialist,  
 Neurosurgery and Spine Surgery Expert

Brain Tumour	
<b>Common Symptoms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent &amp; severe headaches.</li> <li>• A sudden change in headache intensity &amp; pattern but not all headaches are indicative of a tumour.</li> <li>• An unsteady gait, blurred vision &amp; vomiting.</li> <li>• These symptoms can sometimes be overlooked &amp; mistakenly attributed to other comorbidities, causing brain tumours to remain undiagnosed for many years.</li> </ul>
<b>Who is at risk?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brain tumours can affect anyone regardless of age or lifestyle.</li> <li>• Patients with cancer are also more likely to develop secondary brain tumours.</li> </ul>
<b>Cause?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cause is still unknown.</li> </ul>
<b>Steps to take if there are symptoms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advisable to undergo an MRI scan if experiencing clinical symptoms as described in this article.</li> </ul>

Neurosurgery	
<b>Misconception</b>	Our personalities can be permanently altered.
<b>Reality</b>	Drastic changes are more often associated with brain tumours. If untreated, it carries more severe risks & consequences compared to the relatively low risk of surgery.

**Advancement in Technology**

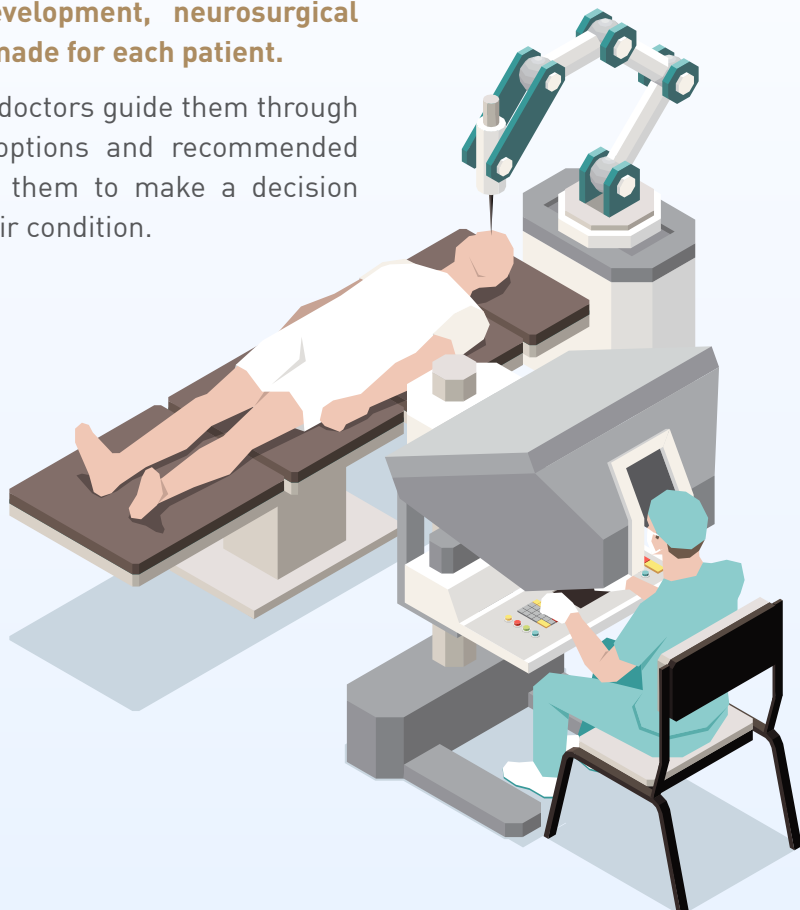
The field of neurosurgery in Malaysia has made significant advancements in both surgical technique and medical technology, further reducing risk associated with neurosurgical procedures, while enabling more precise and effective treatment. Hence, making surgical procedures on brains become exceedingly safe.

The integration of image guidance, imaging dyes and microscope enhancements are great examples of assistive technology and play a key role in enabling surgeons to perform surgeries with improved precision and consistency. Other techniques and technology include ultrasonic aspirator, awake craniotomy and the Gamma Knife.

“ The advancement of technology is to assist neurosurgeons in treatment. Thanks to assistive machinery, a surgeon’s work has become more consistent.” Dr Toh added.

**Given the individualistic nature of the human brain as well as tumour development, neurosurgical interventions are tailor-made for each patient.**

Patients can rest easy as doctors guide them through all available treatment options and recommended procedures, empowering them to make a decision that is most suited for their condition.





**DO YOU KNOW?**

# Let's Keep An Eye On Our Children's Sight

One cannot emphasise how important children's eye health is in contributing to their development and well-being. While parents diligently keep a watchful eye on their children, the pandemic happened, causing various social disruptions, and affected many, including children, in diverse ways.

“ There is data from other countries which shows that the rates of myopia increased during the pandemic when schooling went virtual. The increasing incidence of myopia among children is a growing concern worldwide,” said Dr Chin Pik Kee, SMC's Paediatric Ophthalmologist.



**Dr Chin Pik Kee**  
Paediatric Ophthalmologist

Myopia and the impact of Covid-19 are just a couple of the on-going concerns when it comes to children's eye health. Other concerns include:



### Digital Eye Strain

Caused by digital devices and increased screen time. Among the symptoms are eye fatigue, dry eyes, eyestrain, headaches and blurred vision.

### Eye Injury

Caused by sharp objects, projectiles (e.g. toy guns), firecrackers, as well as bites or scratches from pets and other animals.



### Childhood Obesity

Increases the risk of Type 2 diabetes and diabetic eye disease.

### Lack of Awareness

The importance of regular eye screenings, resulting in delayed diagnosis of important vision problems.



Dr Chin further shared, “Some occurrence may be unavoidable, for instance, the usage of computers or tablets for classes and homework. However, there are ways to help reduce the symptoms by instilling good habits among the children, including, looking away from the screen and into the distance every 20 minutes, remembering to blink often, sitting with a good posture and taking short breaks at regular intervals. Also, it is just sensible to reduce recreational screen time accordingly if the child already spends a lot of screen time for studies.”

“My recommendation is for children to not start playing with digital gadgets until they reach 2 years old. As for children below 10, I suggest limiting recreational screen time to a maximum of 2 hours a day, with breaks in between,” she added.

Dr Chin emphasised that children need time for creative play, physical activities and outdoor time, all of which are important for holistic growth and development of a child. “Children who spend at least 2 hours outdoors daily are less likely to develop myopia. They also start to need glasses for myopia at an older age, if they need them at all.”

Parents should always stay vigilant for any signs of vision problems or discomfort in their children and bring them to see an eye doctor if they notice anything unusual about their child’s eyes or vision.

Here are more proactive steps that parents can take to maintain their children’s eye health:

#### **Eye Screenings**

The best way to detect vision problems. Children can seem to see normally even when they have serious eye conditions. Hence, parents may not notice any concerns until at a later stage.

#### **Encourage Outdoor Activities**

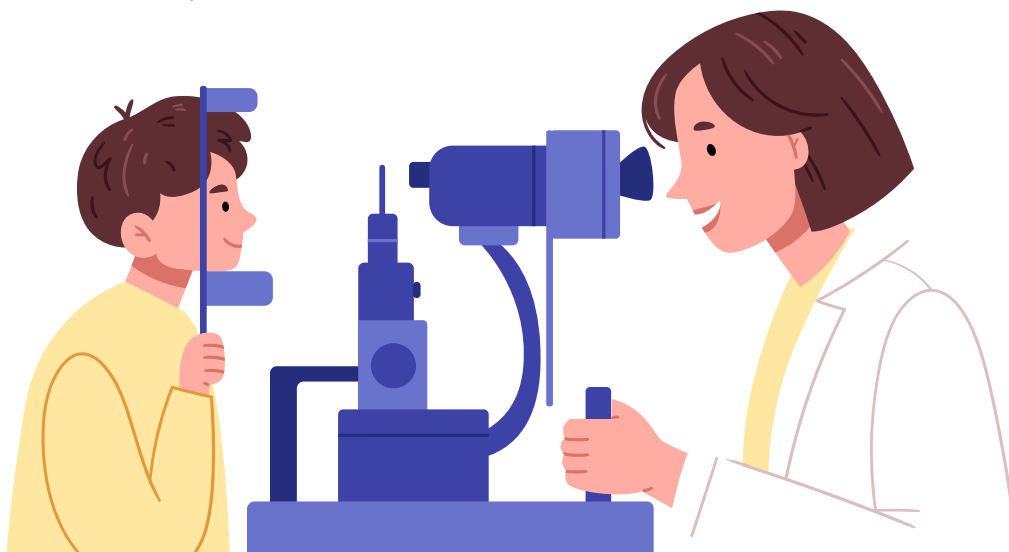
Ensure they cut down gadget use and screen time.

#### **Provide Children with a Healthy, Balanced Diet**

Food rich in omega-3 fatty acids, vegetables and fruits, like carrots, leafy greens, fish, and citrus fruits, contain nutrients that support eye health.

#### **Education on Eye Safety and Prevention of Injuries**

Such as sharp objects, projectiles (e.g., toy guns), firecrackers and bites or scratches from pets.





IN THE SPOTLIGHT

# Knee Problems Common Among Elderlies



Knee problems are a common condition among elderlies and those with other comorbidities, heightening the risk of getting a knee condition such as osteoarthritis.

SMC's Consultant Orthopaedic and Trauma Surgery, Arthroplasty and Robotic Surgery Dr Suhail Suresh said, awareness on when to do checks on the knee is still relatively low among the public and therefore hoped that people be more attentive to their knee conditions.

“Patients who have gotten mild symptoms of knee conditions, such as pain that goes beyond a few days, audible noise within knee joints every time they move, reduction in the ability to go up (and down) the stairs or walk in normal durations, are advised to consult a doctor to examine their knees and undergo an X-ray screening,” he said.

As such, those who suffer from knee conditions may opt for a **total knee replacement** or **partial knee replacement** surgery, depending on the degree of the condition.

“The knee consists of the outer, inner and front (also known a knee cap) parts. In a total knee replacement surgery, all three (damaged) parts of the knee are replaced and installed with metal implants.

“Meanwhile, in a partial knee replacement surgery, only one part of the knee is replaced. The recovery rate for a patient who undergoes such a surgery is much faster than those of total knee replacement,” informed Dr Suhail.



**Dr Suhail Suresh**  
Consultant Orthopaedic and  
Trauma Surgery, Arthroplasty  
and Robotic Surgery



### Late Presentation Of Knee Conditions

Both partial and total knee replacement surgeries are only intended for those aged 50 and above and even then, only one in 10 individuals fulfil the criteria for a partial knee replacement.

According to Dr Suhail, patients usually either show up with late presentation of existing knee conditions, wait until the knee joints are considerably damaged or did not know beforehand that they can seek a check-up on their knees at the sign of the slightest symptoms.

“On the other hand, certain conditions will indicate that one cannot go for partial knee replacement surgery, such as if the knee is tilted with any angulation of more than 10 degrees.

“Other causes include when one could only bend their knee up to 60 degrees and not more than 90 degrees, not to mention progressive knee conditions such as inflammatory arthritis or rheumatoid arthritis,” he said.

### Robotic Technology Takes The Lead

SMC has treated over 550 knee replacement patients using robotics technology, as well as being the first hospital in Southeast Asia to perform a partial knee replacement surgery with the ROSA knee system in May 2023.

“Before this, we had to use a multitude of surgical tools to decide how much of the knee bone we need to cut, to shape the bone using the metal implants and to cut off all damaged cartilages.

“With ROSA, we are able to simplify the surgical process much more. Now we perform X-ray during consultation to calibrate the right size of implants to use. What used to be just purely planning is now planning and execution,” said Dr Suhail.

In the aspect of recovery and rehabilitation, partial knee replacement patients should be able to start walking the day after surgery and will subsequently need to follow up with him for up to one and a half months, including physiotherapy.

Patients can also be discharged from the hospital the next day or the day after, since post-surgery risks are half less compared to a total replacement surgery, where patients are required to stay in the hospital for three to four days.

Dr Suhail stated that if a surgery was done well, in which the implant’s position is right, accurate and alignment is within zero up to a maximum of three degrees of deviation, the implant will be able to sustain the knee anywhere between 15 to 20 years.

“With ROSA, the implants could last up to 30 years. This is why a knee replacement surgeon must have adequate training, experience and volume in performing surgeries like this,” he said.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

# Pancreatic Surgery Eases With Robotics



**Dr Yoong Boon Koon**  
Consultant General, Hepatobiliary  
- Pancreatic and Robotic Surgeon

SMC has successfully conducted pancreatic cancer surgery through the robotic Whipple procedure with the 4th generation surgical robot known as da Vinci Xi on June 17.

Traditionally, the complex Whipple's surgery is done as an open surgery, taking five to six hours and requires highly skilled hands.

## Robotic-assisted Surgery

However, with the aid of a surgical robot such as the da Vinci Xi, this arduous surgery can now be performed with a minimally invasive approach through a few keyholes size incisions.

We currently have two units of da Vinci Xi available and is the only hospital in Malaysia offering robotic-assisted Whipple's procedure.

Besides that, robotic-assisted surgery has many benefits such as smaller incisions required compared to traditional surgery, the dexterity of the robotic arms allows it to perform better in deep and narrow spaces that is difficult to access with hands and with the magnifying view of the robotic controlled camera, anatomy is better visualised making injuries less likely.

With that, it said patient recovery is much faster and able to be discharged earlier due to the smaller wounds and less physiology disturbance, suffering less pain, as well as lower risk of infection with lower complications which allows them to discharge earlier.

## Higher Success Rate

Having the use of robots in surgery offers a higher success rate when case selection is done correctly and should there be challenges to proceed; the surgeon has the option of converting it into an open surgery.

Meanwhile, SMC's Hepatopancreatobiliary (HPB) Consultant Surgeon Dr Yoong Boon Koon said, "The minimally invasive surgical option is only suitable for patients in the early stage of cancer or pre-cancerous conditions."



“Most patients, except those with poor lung or heart functions, and poor general health, are suitable for robotic Whipple procedure. Patients with multiple previous abdominal surgery can make this surgery more challenging,” he added.

Dr Yoong said if the cancer is located at the tail and body of the pancreas, removal of the pancreatic tail, spleen and surrounding lymphatic tissues is the treatment of choice.

“However, if the cancer is found at the head of the pancreas, a complex surgery known as the pancreaticoduodenectomy (Whipple’s procedure) is needed, where it removes the pancreatic head, duodenum, bile duct, and gallbladder,” he stated.



### Signs and symptoms

The most common signs of pancreatic cancer are:



Intestinal obstruction



Loss of appetite



Weight and abdominal pain or mass.



Jaundice (a medical condition in which the skin and the white parts of the eyes become yellow)

“Unfortunately, these symptoms often present late and curative treatments are not feasible on diagnosis. However, for those detected at an early stage during screening (where there is a raised CA19-9 in a blood test or pancreatic mass on ultrasound), surgical removal of the tumour is the only chance of cure,” said Dr Yoong.

He shared that those detected with precancerous tumours carry the best prognosis and surgical resection would usually cure the disease.

Additionally, Dr Yoong said that in Stage 1-3 where the pancreatic cancer is still localised to the pancreas, surgical resection is followed by chemotherapy, while for cancer that has spread to other organs (Stage 4), palliative chemotherapy is the treatment of choice.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

# Non-smoking Women May Be Affected By Lung Cancer

Non-smoking women may be at risk of lung cancer, said SMC's cardiothoracic surgeon Dr Anand Sachithanandan.

He stated that the majority of cases still involve male smokers but the number of non-smokers who are mostly women, continues to rise, adding that, based on his clinical experience, 25% to 30% of lung cancer patients he treats are non-smoking women.



**Dr Anand Sachithanandan**  
Cardiothoracic Surgeon

“From 2012 until 2016, there were 7,686 cases in men with an age-standardised incidence rate (ASR) of 13.2 per 100,000 of the population. For the same period, there were 3,570 cases with an ASR of 5.9 per 100,000 of the population in women,” he revealed while adding, it is the most common cause of cancer death in men and second most fatal cancer in women.

“Besides that, air pollution and exposure to second-hand smoke is thought to create an inflammatory process mediated by chemical messengers called ‘interleukins’ that activates dormant driver mutations or pre-existing cancer-causing genes like the epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) mutation in some vulnerable individuals, also, having a family history of lung cancer is a significant risk factor,” he said.

Dr Anand is quick to point out that tobacco smoking remains the most common and preventable risk factor for lung cancer and there is growing evidence that vaping significantly increases the risk of taking up cigarette smoking due to nicotine addiction.

“Chronic lung diseases can also cause inflammation and scarring of the lung and a cancer could arise from that scar tissue decades later. We do not know the long-term effects of scarring from a severe Covid lung infection. Less common is exposure to radon gas or asbestos,” he informed.



## Screen Yourself

Dr Anand, who is also the founding president of Lung Cancer Network Malaysia, shared that screening is essential to spot early-stage lung cancer, which can be successfully treated with curative surgery, sometimes with varying combinations of immunotherapy, targeted therapy, chemotherapy, and radiotherapy.

“The gold standard of screening is low-dose computed tomography (LDCT), which is painless, accurate, and a single breath test without needles. However, AI (Artificial Intelligence) is currently being explored to improve diagnostic accuracy and may be a useful triage tool. It is being deployed on simple chest X-rays, as it is much cheaper, making it more accessible and many practitioners are using it as a pre-screening tool.”

“If the AI software detects some abnormality in the lung, the person can be quickly referred to a specialist at a private or government hospital for an LDCT. So, it is one earlier step and we hope to capture traditionally neglected populations of women and non-smokers,” he said.

He also recommended current and former smokers aged 45 to 75 who have been smoking at least one pack a day for 20 years or more, even without any symptoms, and those with a family history of lung cancer, to go for screening.

“**The goal of screening is to effect ‘stage shift or stage migration’ and pick up more cases at an earlier stage when the cancer can be treated more effectively, less invasively and more cheaply with vastly better outcomes,**” he informed.

### Higher Chance of Survival

Most lung cancer patients require a multi-disciplinary approach, involving various medical specialists’ expertise such as radiologists, chest physicians, thoracic surgeons and oncologists, and multi-modal therapy to provide the best chance of a cure and long-term disease-free survival.

According to Dr Anand, some (neoadjuvant) treatments are given prior to surgery to reduce the tumour size or eliminate cancer cells in nearby lymph nodes, while other (adjuvant) therapies are given after surgery to achieve local control or to eliminate microscopic disease and reduce the chances of the cancer returning.

“Treatments offered and prognosis are highly dependent on the stage. Stages 1, 2 and carefully selected cases of stage 3a and occasionally, stage 3b are best treated with surgery in combination with other therapies, with the goal of achieving a cure. Stages 3c and 4 are typically treated without surgery, with a non-curative intent, focusing on quality of life and prolonging survival,” he said.

#### Usual symptoms to look out for

- Recurrent chest infections
- Persistent cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Coughing up blood (haemoptysis)
- Chest wall or back pain
- Unexplained weight loss
- Shoulder pain (less common)
- Droopy eyelid (less common)



“All these symptoms depend on the size and location of the tumour. Symptoms like back, chest, or bone pain, unexplained weight loss, or difficulty breathing are indicative of more advanced lung cancer,” said Dr Anand.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

# Importance Of Screening Your Spine For Early Scoliosis Detection



**Dr Saw Lim Beng**  
Consultant Spine Surgeon

Scoliosis is the most common spinal deformity and it is a prevalent medical condition where the spine appears to be an 'S' or 'C' shape which can occur in any part of the spine, including the upper (thoracic), lower (lumbar), middle (thoracolumbar), or even as a double curve (upper and lower regions).

This medical condition affects people of all ages and while it often develops during childhood or adolescence, it can manifest in adulthood where if left untreated, scoliosis can lead to significant discomfort, pain, as well as potential long-term complications.

“**Congenital Scoliosis and Infantile Scoliosis is detected during the first few years of life, while adolescent Idiopathic Scoliosis is the most common form for teens. As for Degenerative Scoliosis, this is usually diagnosed in middle-aged people of around 40 to 50 years old,**” shared Dr Saw Lim Beng, Consultant Spine Surgeon at SMC.



## Detecting Spinal Deformities

One important thing to take note is that scoliosis is commonly associated with spinal rotation deformity, which causes the spine to twist and curve to one side.

Dr Saw revealed that he uses a simple clinical test known as the Adam Forward bending test.

“What the patient needs to do is to bend forward and the examiner stand at the back of patient, compare the level of the left and right side at the back of chest and loin. If there is a hump on one side of the back, it shows that patient has scoliosis,” he said.

Other symptoms may also include shoulder imbalance where one side is higher than the other as well as a pelvic tilt.

“The best way to confirm the condition is by taking a full spine x-ray,” added Dr Saw, while reminding that parents should be aware of this condition in their children and to bring them for assessment early, especially for those who have family history of scoliosis.

For adults, there are two possibilities:

### 1. Idiopathic Scoliosis

Afflicts teens and the curve of the spine progresses as the patient ages, eventually becoming severe in adulthood, usually when patients hit middle-age.

### 2. Degenerative Scoliosis (De Novo Scoliosis)

This group usually has completely normal spine but slowly progresses to develop scoliosis due to deterioration of the spine.

### Being at Ease With Your Back

“Most scoliosis patients do not complain of pain while some may experience back discomfort with prolonged sitting or standing. However, pains such as this is usually treatable with medication and physiotherapy,” shared Dr Saw.

Treatments for children on the other hand, generally rely on their skeletal development maturity, severity of the scoliosis and the risk of continuing curve progressions.

“Minor spinal curve in a young child is usually treated conservatively with braces and physiotherapy, while those with larger curves and body imbalance showing signs of high-risk progression, surgery would probably be a better option,” he said.



#### How to take care of your spine:

- Do not excessively overload the spine, which can increase wear and tear of ligaments as well as disc structure within the spine, as it may lead to an increase in degenerative progression.
- Do regular core muscle exercises and strengthening exercises to improve the strength of the muscles surrounding the spine.
- Have a good posture as it will give even distribution of load across the spine, reducing the wear and tear.



## YOUR EVERYDAY WELLNESS

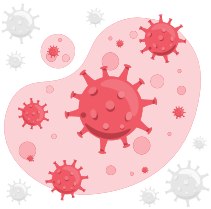
From the life-saving act of blood donation which supports patients in need and the battle against brain tumors in children which highlights the importance of early detection and treatment, to awareness on geriatrics health and hepatitis in children. All these topics are shared in this section to foster a healthier and more compassionate community.



**YOUR EVERYDAY WELLNESS**

# Understanding The A,B,Cs Of Hepatitis In Children

Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver which can be caused by a variety of reasons including infectious viruses and non-infectious agents. There are 5 main strains of hepatitis viruses - Hepatitis A, B, C, D & E – and, unfortunately, children are not spared from contracting them.



**Causes of hepatitis?**

Hepatitis viruses are the most common cause of hepatitis in the world but other infections, drugs, toxins, fatty liver disease or autoimmune diseases can be a cause of hepatitis too.



**Dr Ong Sik Yong**  
 Paediatric Gastroenterology and Hepatology Consultant

“ These hepatitis viruses can all cause hepatitis but they are different in the way they are transmitted and hence, the prevention methods,” said SMC’s Paediatric Gastroenterology and Hepatology Consultant Dr Ong Sik Yong.

	Acute Hepatitis	Chronic Hepatitis
<b>Cause</b>	Viral infection causing acute inflammation of the liver	Hepatitis B or C, fatty liver disease, drugs or autoimmune diseases
<b>Symptoms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jaundice</li> <li>• Dark urine</li> <li>• Extreme fatigue</li> <li>• Nausea</li> <li>• Vomiting</li> <li>• Abdominal pain</li> <li>• Fever</li> <li>• Loss of appetite</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patients are often asymptomatic.</li> <li>• The disease is only discovered in advanced stages/sometimes incidentally through physical exams or blood tests for other illnesses.</li> <li>• Patients with chronic infections are at risk of death from liver cirrhosis and liver cancer.</li> </ul>

## Transmission in Children

Hepatitis A and E	Hepatitis B, C and D
Typically transmitted by faecal oral route where a child may get infected after consuming contaminated food or water.	Transmitted via parenteral route - a result of parenteral contact with infected body fluids. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patients are often asymptomatic.</li> <li>• The disease is only discovered in advanced stages/sometimes incidentally through physical exams or blood tests for other illnesses.</li> <li>• Patients with chronic infections are at risk of death from liver cirrhosis and liver cancer.</li> </ul>

### Treatments for children will focus on the following:

- Supporting the patient’s general condition or reversal of existing damage if possible
- Identified toxins or drugs causing the liver disease to be stopped immediately

Most cases of acute hepatitis will resolve over time with treatment. Some may progress to acute liver failure which can be fatal in a short period of time.

Hepatitis A does not cause chronic liver disease but Hepatitis B and C can cause chronic infection, and infected patients are at risk of death from liver cirrhosis and liver cancer.

“Children with acute or chronic liver disease will require appropriate medical examination to identify the cause before specific treatment can be offered. There are also certain liver diseases, such as autoimmune hepatitis where certain medications may be used to regulate the overactive immune system which will prevent further attacks on the liver,” says Dr Ong.

### Vaccines and Preventions

- Viral hepatitis is highly preventable with appropriate vaccinations, especially against the Hepatitis A and B viruses.
- All newborn babies are recommended to:
  - receive the first Hepatitis B vaccination as soon as possible after birth, preferably within 24 hours of birth
  - receive 2 subsequent vaccine boosters by six months of age
- Hepatitis A vaccine given from one-year-old onwards with the second dose at least six months after the first dose.
- World Health Organisation does not recommend booster vaccinations for persons who have completed the three-dose vaccination schedule.
- For pregnant mothers who are Hepatitis B carriers, antenatal antiviral prophylaxis is recommended to prevent mother to child transmission.
- Hepatitis B vaccination and Hepatitis B immunoglobulin given to newborn babies born to Hepatitis B carrier mothers could help reduce the risk of viral transmission significantly.
- There are currently no vaccines against Hepatitis C, D and E.

In Malaysia, the Hepatitis B vaccination programme for children was introduced in 1989 and has successfully managed to reduce the seroprevalence of infection among Malaysians to

**0.01%** ↓

### Dr Ong advises against:

- Using drugs or supplements with unknown safety profile
- Consuming medication in a way which is not recommended by doctors
- Inappropriate use of over-the-counter medication



YOUR EVERYDAY WELLNESS

# Caring For Elderlies Holistically



When older adults are faced with debilitating medical conditions, it is more than just sending them to the right doctor and having the symptoms treated.

They require the gentle touch of a geriatrician who will not only look at their medical problems, but also delve into their:

- Physical function
- Emotional well-being
- Intellectual functions
- Be their social support when required

Dr Teh Hoon Lang, SMC's Consultant Geriatrician, stated that it is important for geriatricians to not only diagnose the immediate medical issue, but also to comprehensively understand the patients holistically.

"Some problems among older patients may not be identified by usual exams, but a touch from a geriatrician can open up a patient's heart. Human touch is very important in medical practice, something we still need even with technology."

**“ As geriatricians, we try to correct the problems. If the patient has osteoporosis, we will treat it to reduce the risk of fractures. But most importantly, we try to rehabilitate the patient and get him or her back to their previous functions as much as possible,” she said.**

As the world grapples with the challenges posed by an ageing population, it is essential to start investing in geriatric care services and healthcare systems for your loved ones as it not only improves the health outcomes for them, it can also reduce healthcare costs associated with preventable complications and enhance their overall well-being.





**Dr Teh Hoon Lang**  
Consultant Geriatrician

**Most importantly, geriatric care empowers older adults to:**

- Maintain their independence
- Allow them to enjoy a higher quality of life
- Continue contributing to their communities
- Instil a sense of usefulness that many of them feel they lost when they have aged



**Basics of Geriatric Care**

1. A specialised and unique form of healthcare for the ageing population that is comprehensive, personalised, and multidisciplinary.
2. To identify age-related conditions pertaining to functional impairments, cognitive decline, and psychosocial issues.
3. To develop personalised care plans tailored to individual specific needs.
4. To recognise the importance of lifestyle interventions in promoting healthy ageing.

**Giants of Geriatrics**

Geriatric Giants, also known as the five **I**'s, is a term used to describe these common problems or symptoms.

**1. Intellectual Impairment**

Many elderlies live with reduced cognition and memory, probably due to various medical conditions such as dementia and delirium. Electrolyte imbalance or side effects of medication can also lead to forgetfulness.

**2. Instability**

Patients who have issues balancing and the potential of falling, or gait imbalance can be caused by many factors such as vision problems, weakness of the limbs or even stroke. Intervention whenever necessary to improve quality of life and reduce fall risk.

**3. Immobility**

Pertaining to issues related to walking which can be caused by brain or muscle issues and side effects of medication.

**4. Incontinence**

Patients who have problems controlling their urine and bowels. They may not even be aware of the leakage. For elderly men, it may be caused by prostate issues, while for women, childbirth may be a factor.

**5. Iatrogenic**

An issue caused by side effects of medical therapy. Elderlies are more susceptible due to their increased visits to doctors and the need to consume more medication, which can lead to further complications.

# Adding Fun To Wellness: A Carnival Of Health And Education At Sunway Medical Centre, Sunway City

In a refreshing departure from the norm, Sunway Medical Centre, Sunway City (SMC) recently unveiled a new facet to healthcare with the SunMed Carnival. Bridging connections among community members, healthcare professionals, and children of all ages, this community health event was a testament that a hospital could be more than just a place for treatment; it can also be a fun learning and knowledge-sharing hub.

“

*“We strongly advocate that healthcare extends far beyond treating illnesses. By blending medical knowledge with excitement, the SunMed Carnival demonstrated the hospital’s commitment to effect prevention, education, and empowerment towards a healthy lifestyle and well-being. It warms our hearts to witness the enthusiastic involvement of our community and young ones,” said Dr Seow Vei Ken, Chief Executive Officer at Sunway Medical Centre, Sunway City.*

”

Attended by more than 1,900 people, the Carnival featured an array of family-friendly educational activities tailored for children, introducing them to the world of healthcare.

It was also an occasion to showcase the new Tower D, the hospital’s one-stop centre designed to cater to the healthcare needs of infants, children and adolescents. This new tower houses the Children’s Emergency – the first emergency department in a private hospital in Malaysia exclusively dedicated to children under 12 years old, underlining the hospital’s commitment to comprehensive healthcare for the entire family.





One of the standout attractions at the Carnival was the ambulance tour, which left children wide-eyed with wonder as they rode on the lifesaving vehicle. At the same time, they learned about the life-saving role ambulances and paramedics play in patient care.

Other attractions included arts and crafts workshops, a colouring contest, and educational games such as a first aid kit quest to help children acquire skills to respond to common injuries and a body organ match where children discovered the incredible systems of the human body. Attendees also had access to booths that offered health and eye screenings, speech and hearing tests, spine assessments, and dietitian advice on healthy eating.

“We had a great time getting our health screenings, eye checks, and speech and hearing tests. My daughter was especially excited to learn about CPR at the ambulance tour,” shared one of the attendees, Wong Ley Peng, 38, who came with his family from Subang Jaya.



“My daughters had a blast at the game stations. One of my daughters enjoyed the colouring contest and my youngest was the first to have completed every station, compared to her two elder sisters,” shared Elizabeth Jonathan, 39, who also attended the Carnival with her three daughters.



TIPS FROM SUNMED DOCTORS

# Understanding And Navigating Tumultuous Path Of Brain Tumours In Children



**Dr Yap Tsiao Yi**  
 Consultant Paediatrician, Paediatric Haematologist and Oncologist

A child means the world to every parent but unfortunately, children, like everyone else, can face unexpected health challenges, one of them being the daunting and frightening diagnosis of brain tumour.

SMC’s Consultant Paediatrician, Paediatric Haematologist and Oncologist Dr Yap Tsiao Yi said the disease is not selective as it can occur at any age. It is also the second most common cancer and the most common solid tumour in children.

“Brain tumours occurring in children are usually primary tumours, meaning they arise from brain tumour cells. Meanwhile, metastatic brain tumours or tumours that spread from other parts of the body to the brain, are less common in children but can still occur in certain types of childhood cancer,” she said.

Dr Yap explained that although much of the signs and symptoms are dependent on the age of a child and the location of the tumour, in general, a growing tumour can push the brain causing direct pressure to brain tissues or build up of cerebrospinal fluid, resulting in headache and vomiting.

SYMPTOMS	SIGNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certain brain tumours can cause increased production of cerebrospinal fluid and if present in younger infants below the age of one</li> <li>• May cause an increase in head size</li> <li>• Vomiting</li> <li>• Growth delay and/or crankiness (crying that is inconsolable without reason)</li> <li>• Headaches</li> <li>• Vomiting especially early morning vomiting</li> <li>• Nausea</li> <li>• Irritability or personality changes</li> <li>• Drowsiness, in the later stage</li> <li>• Decreased responsiveness which can lead to coma, and if left untreated, death</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eye vision deteriorate - Double vision, blurry vision and other vision changes</li> <li>• Abnormal eye movements</li> <li>• Slurred speech</li> <li>• Paralysis or weakness of part of the face or body</li> <li>• Communication problems</li> <li>• Problems in walking</li> <li>• Seizures</li> </ul>



“Parents are encouraged to be vigilant and if they detect any kind of signs and symptoms, they should consult a doctor for evaluation, while in cases of emergency, they should bring their children to the emergency department as soon as possible,” said Dr Yap.

DIAGNOSIS	TREATMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive history and physical exam by a doctor, in particular:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ A thorough neurological exam</li> <li>◦ Imaging studies, including computed tomography (CT) scan or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of the brain</li> </ul> </li> <li>• When tumour is found:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Blood tests to determine if tumour markers are elevated</li> <li>◦ Lumbar puncture (if required) to examine cerebrospinal fluid for tumour cells</li> <li>◦ Biopsy of the tumour to confirm diagnosis</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>The options for treatments are highly dependent on the type of brain tumour, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal surgery</li> <li>• Chemotherapy</li> <li>• Radiation therapy</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A combination of all three treatments with varying recovery time according to the treatment.</li> </ul> <p>With advancements in medical sciences, with early detection and proper treatment, many children and their families can successfully overcome the hurdles of being diagnosed with a brain tumour.</p>



TIPS FROM SUNMED DOCTORS

# Blood – Essential Lifesaver Of Chronic Haematology Patients

Blood donation is extremely crucial to sustain human life, especially for those who were born with hereditary blood disorders or have contracted blood cancers where their bone marrow is not able to reproduce healthy blood cells naturally.

Various haematology diseases require constant blood transfusion such as:

- Acute leukaemia who are presented with cytopaenias (low levels of red or white blood cells, or platelets)
- Acute leukaemia or lymphoma who developed anaemia or thrombocytopenia due to treatments like chemotherapy
- Chronic disorders involving haemoglobinopathy like Thalassaemia major

“Therefore, blood transfusion is necessary for them to sustain the organ function, growth, general well-being, hence support life for those patients,” said Dr Ho Kim Wah, Consultant Haematologist and Transplant Physician at SMC.



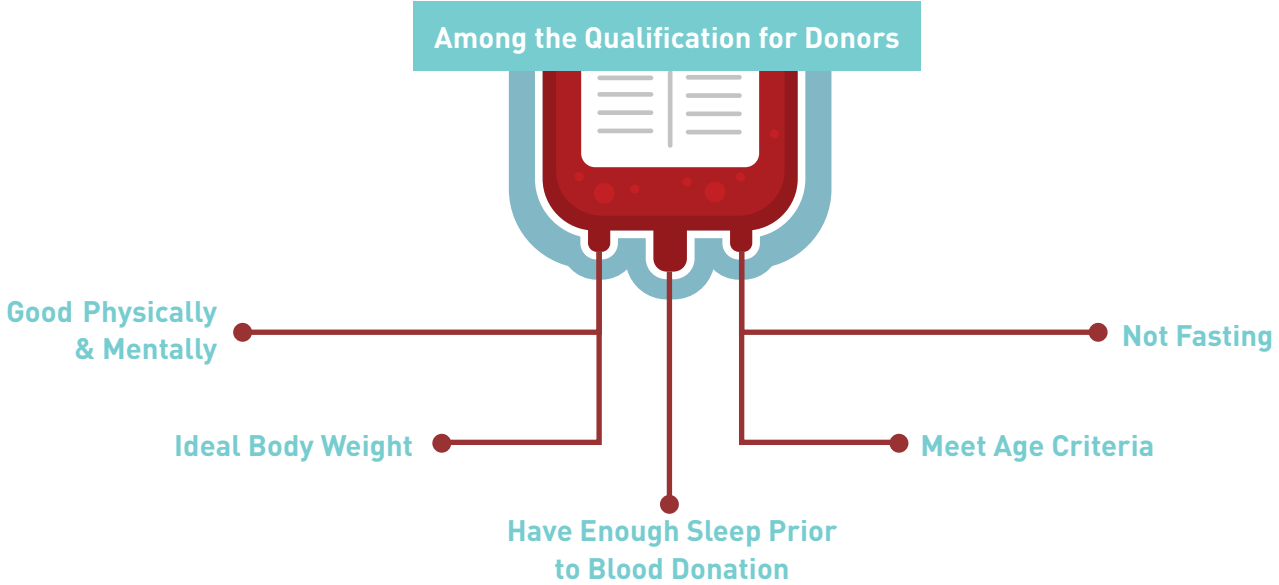
**Dr Ho Kim Wah**  
Consultant Haematologist and Transplant Physician

Low blood supply will result in suboptimal blood treatments for haematology patients hence signals poor outcome for their health.

“They may experience impaired organ function, poor growth, complications from extramedullary haematopoiesis as well as poor quality of life. In serious situations, suboptimal transfusion due to inadequate blood supply may even cause death,” he shared.

## Are there risks for donors?

Risk is fairly minimal as long as the donor fulfils the qualification to become a blood donor.



## What do you need to do after donating blood?



Rest For at Least  
10 minutes



Have Light  
Refreshment



Drink Plenty  
of Water



Avoid Strenuous  
Activities in the First  
24 Hours

### What about the risks for recipients?

Blood transfusions these days are known to be a safe procedure. Nevertheless, depending on individuals, there might be some minor risks:

- Allergic reaction
- Febrile non-haemolytic transfusion reaction
- Acute haemolysis (fever, flank pain, and red or brown urine)
- Transmission of blood-borne infection (very rare case)
- Bacterial infection/sepsis most commonly due to contaminated blood product (very rare case)

“If a patient develops symptoms such as fever, chills, rigours, chest pain, sweatiness, itchiness, breathlessness, or any sense of uneasiness, they or their guardian should report it to the nurses or doctors immediately,” advises Dr Ho.



### Breaking the myths

There are many myths and taboos on blood donation and transfusion, which may hinder essential life treatments, such as:

- Blood donation reduces one’s lifespan.
- Can get infection during blood donation.
- Damaging to internal organs.
- Blood bank has more than enough.
- Donated blood will be discarded by authorities if not used immediately.

These myths and assumptions can be life threatening to patients who truly require blood donation.

At the end of the day, do remember, **ONE** bag of blood will save **THREE** lives. Take a stand and save a life today!

**SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS**

# Scoliosis Awareness Day 2023

It was a Saturday well spent at SMC who organised the Scoliosis Awareness Day 2023 at SunMed Convention Centre, held on 24 June from 8.30am to 1pm.

SMC's Chief Executive Officer Dr Seow Vei Ken officiated the event with a welcome speech, followed by sharing from SMC Consultant Spine Surgeon Dr Lim Heng Hing, Dr Lau Choon Ping, Dr Saw Lim Beng, Ambassador of Malaysia Scoliosis Support Group Ms Shida Sapie, and founder of My Scolio Physio & Pilates Ms Caroline Lai Ker Li.

More than 150 participants attended, including SMC's Cherish Club members. Everyone was engaged in interactive Q&A sessions on scoliosis, orthotics, and conservative as well as surgical interventions.

In addition, they were also given a chance to listen to patients' experiences during the sharing sessions where the patients revealed their recovery journeys.

There was also a spine screw live demonstration by Dr Saw Lim Beng and Dr Lau Choon Ping using Medtronic instruments. A team of therapists from SMC Rehabilitation Medicine Centre also ran a booth allowing participants to do quick onsite assessments.

Through this event, everyone gained a better understanding of scoliosis, a condition where the spine abnormally curves sideways, as well as possible treatments to improve the conditions.







**SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS**

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunway Oncology And Palliative Symposium 2023

Sunway Medical Centre, Sunway City organised the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunway Oncology and Palliative Symposium 2023 virtually on 8 & 9 July 2023. The Symposium features a series of talks from SMC's own consultants as well as expert speakers from Australia, Norway and the USA.

Under the theme "Enhancing Patience-Centred Cancer Care", among the topics covered during the 2-day Symposium were:

- Management of difficult cancer pain
- Personalising cancer therapy
- Cancer genetic profiling for treatment & risk management
- Life after cancer treatment
- Spiritual care
- Secual Heath
- Dignity-conserving therapy

The Symposium seccessfully brought together a large audience with international participations from the Philippines, Brunei, Indonesia, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, India, Cambodia, UAE, Hong Kong, UK, Germany, Canada, Australia and many more.



## SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS

# Hand Hygiene Day 2023

In conjunction with World Hand Hygiene Day in May this year, Sunway Medical Centre, Sunway City had a special Hand Hygiene Day celebration at our facility SunMed Convention Centre.

The event started with a warm welcome by SMC's Chief Executive Officer Dr Seow Vei Ken, and a keynote speech by Hospital Sungai Buloh's Head of Department for General Internal Medicine and Senior Infectious Diseases Consultant YBhg Dato' Dr Suresh Kumar A/L Chidambaram.

Attendees also got to listen to informative talks by Hospital Sungai Buloh's Head of Infection Control and Infectious Disease Consultant Dr Yasmin Mohammed Gani as well as Infection Control Lecturer Marina Idi, who were both present at the event.

Adding to the excitement of the event were our Infection Control Link Nurses and Officers from Rehabilitation Medicine Centre, Surgical Daycare and Haemodialysis Department's lively performances, where they skilfully integrated the 5 steps of proper handwashing into their dance routine. The prizes were also given out to our Hand Hygiene Compliance Excellence Award recipients, and some of our attendees brought home lucky draw prizes! The attendees also got to participate in activities and enjoy yummy treats from the booth opened outside the hall.

The event was a resounding success. As the result, everyone was inspired to join hands in continuing to maintain high hand hygiene standards especially at the healthcare facility.



**SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS**

# Paediatrics Symposium



SMC organised the SunMed Paediatric Symposium 2023 on 22 & 23 July, garnering over 4,200 participants physically and virtually over the weekend.

With the theme “Integrating Perspectives from Diverse Paediatric Specialties”, the Symposium brought together participants from Malaysia and other countries, among them were Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand.

The Symposium delved into a wide range of vital topics in children’s health as well as emphasised the importance of a multi-disciplinary approach in paediatrics.

The attendees had an enriching experience, as top paediatricians of various sub-specialities from the hospital shared their expertise and insights on topics such as paediatric critical care, emergency cases in children, common

paediatric skin, joint and kidney disorders, late effects of childhood cancer, as well as growth and development in children.

During the first day, the physical participants were also brought on a tour to the new Tower D, where they visited the Children’s Emergency, the first dedicated children’s emergency department among private hospitals in Malaysia.

They also got a glimpse of our one-stop centre for integrated paediatric healthcare, along with its state-of-the-art facilities and conducive environment specifically designed to provide specialised care for little ones.

As the largest private quaternary hospital in the country, SMC is always committed to hosting educational symposiums to promote more interactive learning opportunities from experts in their respective fields.

**SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS**

# Eye Centre Sheds Light On Vision Health At Pesta Jom Sihat!

Being committed to the community’s welfare and laser focus on prioritising vision health, the Eye Centre of SMC participated in the Pesta Jom Sihat organised by the Puchong Parliamentary Office on 8, 9 and 16 July 2023 at Balai MPKK Puchong Batu 14, Puchong Utama Court 1 and Kampung Tengah Community Centre, respectively.

A booth was set up to provide comprehensive eye screening to residents during the three days, which included vision tests, cataract screening and retinal fundus screening. Over 80 comprehensive eye tests were carried out each day.

During the event, MP for Puchong YB Yeo Bee Yin visited the booth to gain a better understanding of the screenings that were carried out. The event saw SMC’s General Manager of Women and Children Services Dr Ng Lee Li joining on the first day and the Manager of Eye Centre Services Yong Ai Chee on the first two days.

We hope that the screenings offer the public insights to the importance of taking care of their eye health.







## SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS

# Parents' Choice Awards 2023 For Best Cancer Centre

SMC Cancer Centre has bagged a tremendous win at the Parenthood 6th annual Parents' Choice Awards 2023 for Best Cancer Centre.

This win comes from the votes of numerous Parenthood's readers and followers who are mostly Millennials and Gen Z parents. They are modern parents who are known to always put quality and assurance first when finding the most suitable products and services for their children.

SMC's Cancer Centre is listed together with esteemed winners from different categories that encompass both products as well as services who have won over the trust from Malaysian parents.

Congratulations to our dedicated teammates at the Sunway Cancer Centre and thank you to Parenthood and its readers for the recognition.

**SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS**

# 1,000 da Vinci Surgeries Achieved!

The hospital began this incredible journey of the da Vinci programme using the da Vinci Xi, a third generation surgical robot. Furthering that, in 2022, we became the pioneer in Malaysia to install the first da Vinci Xi, a fourth generation surgical robot.

Together with an ever-growing robotics family, SMC would like to thank the diligence and hard work of the group of surgeons, nurses, ground staffs and Management team who had made this possible.

To date, the Sunway Healthcare Group (SHG) owns three da Vinci Xi, showcasing our commitment in bringing the values of minimally invasive surgery to more patients. This ensures our dedication to offer improved surgery outcomes as well as reduced surgical variability through robotics platforms.



## SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS

# TRoom



The Child Development Department in SMC together with Fourier Intelligence proudly present a newly advanced technology known as the TRoom - first of its kind in Southeast Asia.

The TRoom is a special environment built-up in a room designed to help patients with different needs by utilising technology and physical devices to stimulate the senses and can be used as medical treatment in assessing physical performance and helping with learning.

SMC Chief Executive Officer, Dr Seow Vei Ken said, "As the largest private quaternary hospital in the country, the hospital's multi-disciplinary team has always been exploring new and innovative ways to serve and improve patients' experience."

“ With 22 paediatric sub-specialities, which includes children development services, our hospital continues to expand and now includes the TRoom and sensory playroom, which are among our latest initiatives to help our young patients with learning delays. ”

The TRoom is equipped with advanced systems of voice and facial recognition that can be programmed to create an immersive and realistic experience. Hence, therapy sessions held there can create a calming environment, while keeping the young patients engaged. It involves activities that can stimulate the senses, including visual, auditory, tactile, vestibular, olfactory, and proprioception senses. These are essential to help in improving and helping children with specific needs for better functions, which can lead to better results in their recovery.



## SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS

# #SunMedCares: People Of SunMed



### Bringing Joy Through Cleaning

“Meeting and interacting with people is my favourite part of the job. As I clean, I also find joy in brightening up the patients’ days and making them feel more comfortable. One patient with cancer confided to me that she had initially lost hope in overcoming the disease. However, she shared that my positive outlook on life helped her discover new reasons to look forward to the future. Hearing this touched my heart; it’s the reason why I go the extra mile to do what I do.”

**Meet Mohd Ridzuan, our cheery Housekeeping Attendant who never fails to brighten the day of everyone he meets with a smile.**

Being a people-oriented person, he always makes an effort to bring some joy into patients’ lives through the little things as he works, whether it is through a cheery greeting or making friendly conversation.

He plays a crucial role in ensuring your comfort and safety during your stay in the wards by maintaining the cleanliness of these areas regularly and attending to your requests for items like towels and linens. To ensure a safe and hygienic environment for everyone, he ensures that the space is disinfected thoroughly.

We extend our deepest thanks to Ridzuan and the rest of our Housekeeping team for going above and beyond to make our surroundings spick and span and helping make our patients’ stay a comfortable one. We appreciate you!

### Congratulations Mohd Ridhwan Mat Daud!

We are excited to celebrate the remarkable accomplishment of our senior radiation therapist, Mohd Ridhwan Mat Daud, who has recently won 5th prize for his outstanding poster presentation at the 24th Asia-Australasia Conference of Radiological Technologists 2023 (AACRT)!

Here is us extending our heartfelt congratulations to him for his outstanding achievement. Good job!







### Seamless experience from start to end

“We had a stem cell transplant patient from Indonesia who suddenly started having seizures in her room. I still remember her companion tightly gripping my hand, shivering and looking as if she might faint. She was in the ICU for a short while. I was the one who contacted her husband and arranged for him to fly down from Indonesia. She has since been discharged. I recently checked in with her, and she is doing well.”

### Meet Catherine Ma Zi Ling, our Stem Cell Transplant Coordinator who previously worked as a pharmacist in the UK!

If your doctor decides that you require a stem cell transplant to treat your leukaemia or lymphoma, she will ensure a seamless transplant experience from beginning to end.

She acts as a liaison between you, your family, consultants, and various hospital departments like finance, pharmacy, and radiology, coordinating appointments and addressing concerns you may have.

Before the transplant, she will work closely with our Consultant Haematologist during the stem cell donor selection process, where she will organise the pre-transplant workup and stem cell collection.

As the patient, you will have multiple counselling sessions with her before and after your stem cell transplant. During these sessions, she will educate you about everything you need to know about the process, answer your questions, and assess your progress.

Her support extends beyond the transplant. After discharge, she will reach out to you annually to check up on your well-being.

Thank you, Catherine, for all your hard work to ensure a smooth experience for our stem cell transplant patients!



# PROTECT YOUR LOVED ONES FROM FLU

## Get A Flu Vaccine



The CDC recommends everyone 6 months and older to get the flu vaccine annually.<sup>1</sup>

## Good Respiratory Hygiene



Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues and dispose of them correctly.<sup>2</sup>

## Wash Your Hands



Wash your hands often with soap and water.<sup>2</sup>

The best way to prevent flu is by getting a flu vaccine each year.<sup>3</sup>

CDC, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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## Made with Care & Certifications



## In the Spotlight: Organic Beauty Award 2023



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