

# The **Hearty** Digest

**SUNWAY**  
MEDICAL CENTRE®  
Sunway City

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www.sunwaymedical.com

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FROM THE EDITOR

# The Way To The Heart Is Through The Gut

Welcome to the second half of the year! I hope my fellow Muslim readers had a wonderful Raya celebration with your families. It was truly a happy occasion to finally be able to see loved ones and I'm sure you can share the same sentiments after years of being away.

Festive seasons call for indulging in delicious food and good food is the way to anyone's hearts. Whether it is that mouth-watering rendang or spoiling yourself with ice cream, I'm sure you have some foods that call out to you personally.

“ You are what you eat and a healthy diet contributes to your overall health. As it happens, eating well can also do wonders for your heart health. Read on as our Cardiologist, Dr Patrick Tiau shares his passion in treating heart failure and learn how gut microbiome contributes to your health with Datin Dr Wendy Lim, Gastroenterologist and Hepatologist. ”



What is more, hope is a powerful force against all odds when an end stage cancer patient overcame her predicament, proving that miracles can happen every day. It is success stories like this that motivate us to echo World Cancer Day's new theme 'Close the Care Gap' by encouraging a trusting nurse-patient relationship.

I hope you enjoy this issue as much as I enjoyed bringing it to life. Till the next one, cheers!



*Nur Yee Jie Min*  
Editor, The Hearty Digest

**The Editorial Team**  
Branding & Communication,  
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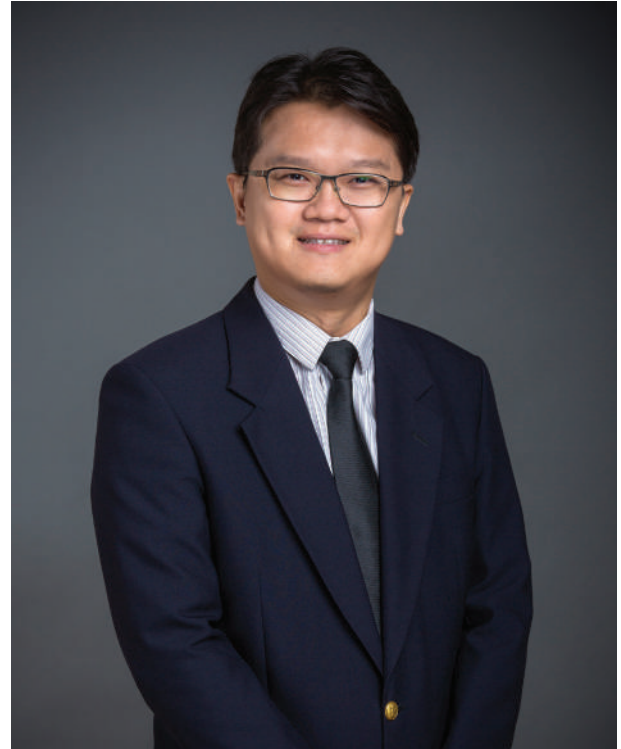
## A MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING CEO

# Great Habits Carries On

After having gone through two years of the pandemic, we're finally entering into an endemic stage where restrictions have been lifted and most of us have started travelling, going back to the office, and celebrating festivities with loved ones.

It's a much needed relief for those of us who want to return to some sense of normalcy; but I would like to encourage individuals, young and old alike, to continue keeping to good hygiene and mask-wearing practices. These are practices that we have cultivated from the pandemic, which I believe are great habits to carry on.

Similarly, maintaining a consistent good habit of eating well and exercising is an important aspect as well. As an emergency physician, I always believe we should be able to tell the signs and symptoms of heart failure in order to respond quickly in an emergency. Especially when it comes to children, heart diseases can even go unnoticed!



“

Prioritising your health is important, so don't forget to take note of any sudden changes in you or your children's bodies. You can always trust us to provide you and your family with the best care possible with our wide range of specialist consultants who are able to cater to various health needs. If ever in doubt, you can also visit our 24-hour emergency department, which is manned by professional emergency physicians.

”

We look forward to bringing you more catered services as we continue to grow and expand the hospital in the coming year.

*Dr Seow Vei Ken*

Medical Director and Acting Chief Executive Officer,  
Sunway Medical Centre

DO YOU KNOW?

# When Food Evolution and Heart Health Come Together

Follow your heart. Trust your gut. You must have heard of this advice when faced with decisions. As it turns out, your heart and digestive health are linked together. Research has found that changes in certain types of gut bacteria are associated with heart attacks, heart failure and strokes.

Let's dive into some facts on food evolution and heart health.



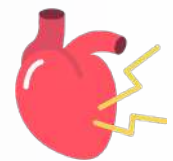
If you find yourself saying “this tastes just like how my grandmother made it” – your taste buds are playing tricks on you. An egg laid, a chicken hatched and wheat grown 50 years ago are nothing like what we are used to today. Food has evolved at such a rapid pace that food on our tables does not resemble what our ancestors once ate.

The biggest revolution is when we learned to cook. Our ancestors began cooking sometime between 1.8 million and 2.3 million years ago. Cooking “pre-digests” food so our guts spend less energy breaking it down and absorb more than it was raw. This is also why we have evolved to depend on cooked food.



As its name suggests, lab-grown meat is artificial meat grown from animal cells in a laboratory. The first-ever lab-grown burger was created in 2013 and lab-grown chicken meat made a historic debut in Singapore in 2020. While it is not commercially available yet, it has been in the works for quite some time.

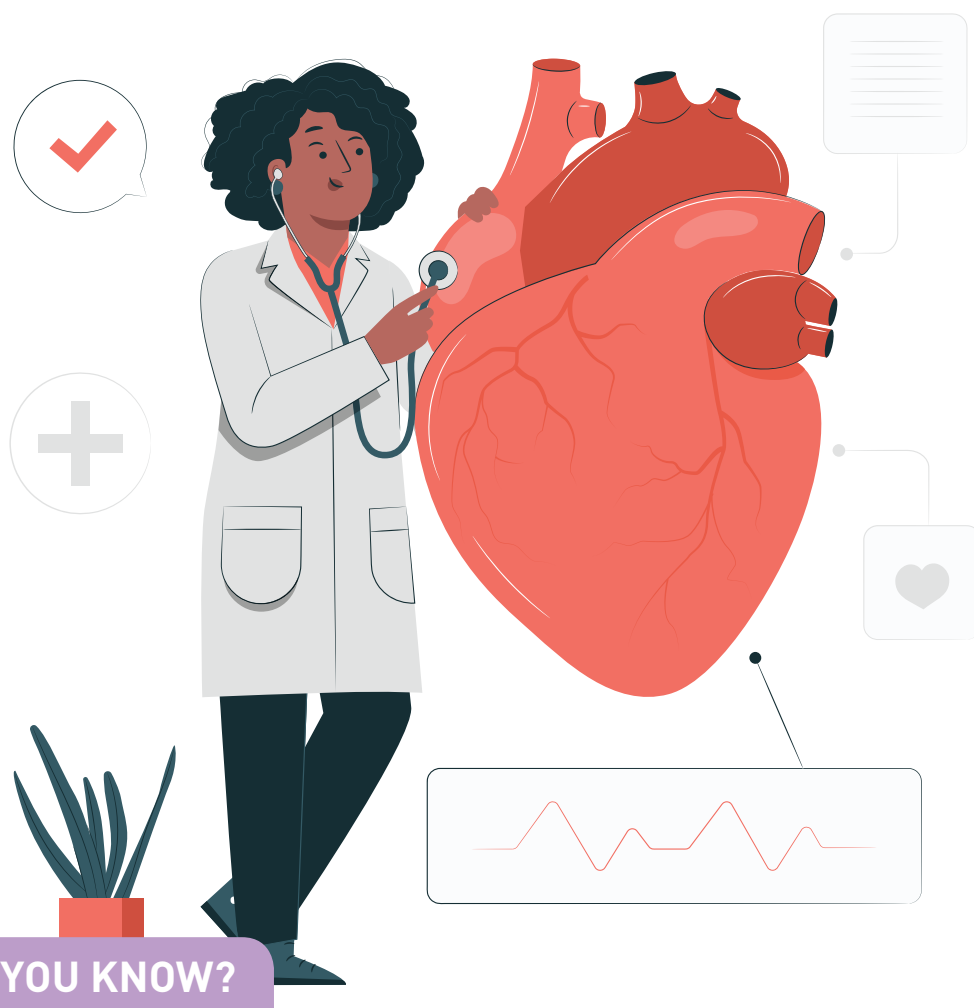
Cardiovascular disease was the third cause of death in Malaysia in 1950 and emerged as the No.1 killer in the 1970s. It has remained so until today (with the exception in 1980) recording 17% of deaths in 2020. Malaysians are also found to be suffering from heart attacks at a younger age; the average being 58.6 years compared to between 63.4 and 68 years in developed countries.



A UK guideline issued in 1977 suggested that fat should form no more than 30% of daily food intake to reduce the risk of heart disease. However, this was justified by research available at the time and its data was based on a small number of unhealthy men. Instead, Britons have been advised that a healthy diet should limit saturated fat to just a tenth of daily calorie intake to reduce cholesterol.

It was in the 1960s and 1970s that treatments like bypass surgery and percutaneous balloon angioplasty were first used to help treat heart disease, according to the Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions.





**DO YOU KNOW?**

## Is Broken Heart Syndrome Real?

You have most probably seen a protagonist die of a broken heart in movies but how real is this? In fact, you can die of a broken heart. It is called broken heart syndrome, also known as stress cardiomyopathy or takotsubo syndrome.

It occurs when a person experiences sudden, intense stress which causes the heart muscles to weaken. Although the symptoms are similar to a heart attack including shortness of breath and chest pain, in broken heart syndrome you don't have blocked coronary arteries.

While most of us experience stress daily, stress from day-to-day life does not cause broken heart syndrome. However, if you experience frequent chest pain or shortness of breath, seek medical attention.

Broken heart syndrome is a condition that happens suddenly and resolves quickly. It also doesn't cause any permanent heart damage. Despite this, speak to your healthcare provider to learn how to best cope with stress and go for regular check-ups to be at the top of your health.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: HEART HEALTH

# When The Heart Fails with Dr Patrick Tiau

This was adapted from BFM Health & Living interview. Listen to the full podcast [here](#).

Your heart is a muscle with a crucial job – to pump blood throughout your body. But what happens when the heart cannot pump blood as well as it should?

Sunway Medical Centre, Sunway City Consultant Cardiologist, Dr Patrick Tiau sheds some light on what happens when the heart fails and why heart failure needs to be detected and treated early.



**Dr Patrick Tiau**  
Consultant Cardiologist

## What happens when the heart is unable to pump blood effectively?

The first organ to be affected is the lung. When the left ventricle is unable to pump effectively, this causes a backflow to the lungs. This leads to shortness of breath and is what is described as *paru-paru berair*. This fluid accumulation then leads to swelling in the legs.

## What causes heart failure?

We know that ischaemic heart disease is the leading cause of mortality in Malaysia, and heart failure is a secondary consequence that develops after cardiovascular disease or problems with the heart valves. We have also begun to recognise that diabetes alone can cause heart failure indirectly. Besides this, thyroid conditions if left untreated can lead to heart failure.

## Who is at risk of heart failure?

Those who have diabetes, hypertension and a family history of heart problems. Many patients who come to me for a heart attack are unaware they have hypertension and diabetes. For younger patients, there are different causes like congenital problems or arrhythmia which if left

untreated can lead to heart failure. Smokers are also a leading risk group.

## What are the signs of heart failure?

The earliest signs are when your effort tolerance is not the same as before. For example, if you were able to climb five flights of stairs easily but find yourself unable to do so recently, or you find yourself unable to walk long distances as before. Other signs are difficulty breathing and fatigue. If you experience any symptoms, seek medical advice as it is important for us to separate symptoms that raise concern than those that are not.

## How do you diagnose heart failure?

From good clinical history and examination. We now have a blood test called N-terminal pro-brain natriuretic peptide (NT-proBNP) which is highly sensitive in diagnosing heart failure. An echocardiogram (ECG) is a simple and accessible tool that can detect any evidence of a heart attack in the past, abnormal heart rhythms, as well as enables us to look into the contraction and valves.

### How do you manage heart failure?

I emphasise on patient education as heart failure is a condition that affects patients for their entire lives. I believe we shouldn't just give medication to treat this condition. We have to investigate the cause to improve the outcomes. Yet having said that, with advanced medication and technology, we now have 4-5 types of medication for heart failure.

In terms of lifestyle modifications, the biggest enemy of heart failure is salt. Reduce salt intake! The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends a daily salt intake of less than 2 grams.

Also, I always ask my patients to monitor their weight and to weigh themselves daily as it is a sign of fluid accumulation. There is an ongoing debate that heart failure patients should reduce fluid intake but this is not true. Heart failure can reoccur when the patient's medication is not at its optimal dose. Those with advanced heart failure should watch their fluid intake but the rest can take fluids as usual.

We need a holistic, comprehensive approach to managing heart failure. To prevent the next heart failure, I educate the patients to know what to look out for. If they are experiencing any symptoms, they can call me and I can tell them how to treat it with medication; to increase the dose or frequency. This has effectively reduced hospital admission.

### How can heart failure be prevented?

Look out for cardiovascular risk factors, go for routine medical check-ups and quit smoking.

When going for a medical check-up, there are some tests that are important when it comes to the cardiovascular perspective and the type of test you should undergo depends on your clinical risk profile.

Besides a blood test, blood pressure is important as hypertension is recognised as a silent killer. An angiogram is a valid tool to detect heart conditions however it is invasive despite its accuracy and only patients with symptoms should go for this.

For young patients without risk factors, a treadmill test is sufficient while those with risk factors can consider adding on CT coronary angiogram that is non-invasive. An echocardiogram (ECG) is also recommended.





IN THE SPOTLIGHT: DIGESTIVE HEALTH

# # SunMedHerStories: Making A Gut Connection with Datin Dr Wendy Lim

Our stomachs may be the one organ which we are highly attuned to. With a growl, it tells you that it's time for lunch. A little rumble and you know it's time to sit on the throne. And some cramps may mean something you ate isn't going down well. Our stomachs are truly expressive.

Having said that, when it comes to gut health, our stomachs aren't the only leading actors. In fact, the gut is a huge organ, spanning 32m<sup>2</sup>, that's the size of a small apartment! Known as the gastrointestinal tract (GI), our gut starts at our mouths and ends at the anus, including the pharynx (throat), oesophagus, small and large intestines, and rectum.

Listening to our gut and understanding what is happening with our bodies gives us the opportunity to manage our health better. An unhealthy gut, if left unchecked or untreated, could speed up the development of diseases, disorders and potentially, cancer.



## The Gut Connection

Within the medical fraternity, doctors agree that there is undoubtedly a correlation between a healthy gut and the health of the gut's microbiome. The key is understanding how our gut microbiome works; a complex ecosystem within our gut that consists of bacteria, viruses and fungi. But wait, aren't these bad for the human body?

“The human gut microbiome consists of organisms that can be beneficial (good bacteria) and that can also be potentially harmful to us by promoting diseases (bad bacteria). In healthy individuals, good and bad bacteria can coexist without problems,” explains Datin Dr Wendy Lim, Consultant Gastroenterologist and Hepatologist at Sunway Medical Centre, Sunway City. ”

“Good bacteria are a critical component in digestion and breaking down complex carbohydrates,

proteins, and to a lesser extent, fats that reach the lower GI. They can synthesise vitamins (B and K), amino acids and short chain fatty acids. It also imparts a protective function by displacing pathogens and fortifying barriers in the intestine,” she adds.

So, where do gut microbes come from? Humans are exposed to microorganisms at birth, during delivery and from a mother's breast milk. Over time, microbiomes are acquired from diet and environmental exposure. Age, diet, illness and medications are factors that disrupt our gut microbiome.

Medication such as antibiotics will change the distribution of various types of bacteria, potentially shifting the dominant species in the gut and having a profound effect on the composition of your gut microbiome.

“When this becomes imbalanced, it becomes a state of dysbiotic microbiome that can potentially trigger inflammation by activating proinflammatory cytokines. You may end up triggering a low-grade inflammation within the gut,” says Dr Wendy.

There are increasing studies linking the gut microbiome to certain diseases such as inflammatory bowel disease, autoimmune diseases, diabetes, asthma, obesity, cancer and anxiety. It may also determine how an individual responds to chemotherapy treatment.

“However, it is important to be aware that most studies show association rather than cause and effect. It may be that the changes seen in the gut microbiome are secondary effects of an illness rather than being the primary cause,” Dr Wendy notes.

### Trust Your Gut

The gut microbiome plays an essential part in protective, metabolic and physiologic functions that influence human health. An imbalance in the microbiome can lead to increased risk of infections and possibly other diseases.

“You are what you eat,” advises Dr Wendy. “Take care of your gut by eating balanced meals, avoiding fat, oil, processed carbohydrates, alcohol and excessive amounts of food, and stop smoking.”

While there are many advertisements that promote additional supplements to your diet, it is crucial to do your research. The benefits of prebiotics and probiotics to health have been widely talked about but before you go running to add it into your diet, what are they?

Prebiotic is a non-digestible food ingredient that acts as food for the gut microbiome. They are degraded by the bacteria to form short chain fatty acids which are released into the GI and absorbed into the blood circulation. They naturally exist in foods, typically high fibre foods.

Meanwhile, probiotics are beneficial bacteria and/or yeast used to maintain a healthy balance of good bacteria in the gut. There are many types of good bacteria but the two most common types are lactobacillus and bifidobacterium.

“There is little robust evidence to recommend which brand of prebiotics and probiotics to take for any particular condition. However, there is some evidence that probiotics, in the form of supplements or food rich in good bacteria like yoghurt, might be a good idea if an individual takes antibiotics or has irritable bowel syndrome.

“Unravelling the type of microbiome and the mechanisms of action or pathogenicity will expand our knowledge and develop treatments in randomised control trials so we can make concrete recommendations,” says Dr Wendy.



# YOUR EVERYDAY WELLNESS

What is wellness? Wellness is defined as the active pursuit of activities, choices and lifestyles that lead to a state of holistic health. The key words here being “active pursuit”, meaning our intentions, choices and actions contribute to our state of health and wellbeing. So, by making better choices and changing our behaviours and lifestyles, we are well on our way to attaining wellness.



## YOUR EVERYDAY WELLNESS – HEALTHY EATS

# Debunking Diet Myths

Food myths are plentiful, and it is not surprising that we start believing in them when products or websites claim they have miraculous benefits to our health. Let's quash some common diet myths, and start making better food choices for our health.

### Carbs will blow up your diet

Carbs have been shunned by many over fears that consuming this macronutrient will cause obesity, diabetes, and other unfavourable health effects.

In reality, eating a moderate amount of nutritious carbs that are high in fibre, vitamins, and minerals like starchy root vegetables, ancient grains and legumes will likely benefit your health holistically.

However, bad carb options like cakes, cookies, sweetened beverages, and white bread should be restricted, if not avoided, as these foods have no nutrients, and increase disease risk when eaten excessively.



### Low-fat and fat-free products are healthier

Take a trip to your local grocery store and you'll find a variety of products labelled with low-fat, light or fat-free. Ironically, many low fat and diet food products have much more added sugar and salt to make up for the loss of flavour when removing or reducing fat.

Choosing a fat-free product to reduce calories can backfire as you may find yourself snacking soon after. Instead, pay attention to sugar and sodium content and enjoy small amounts of foods like full fat yoghurt, cheese, and nut butter.



### Certain foods, such as cayenne pepper, vinegar or grapefruit, can burn fat

Diets that focus on single foods are restrictive and lack nutrients the body needs. In fact, no food can burn fat. They just increase the body metabolism that has an effect on weight loss, which the effectiveness still relies heavily on the whole food consumption. These foods are also unsustainable, and any weight loss that may occur is a result of short term calorie restriction that will likely come back once you discontinue.



### Drinking more water means greater weight loss

Water is essential for our body but it does little to none to aid weight loss. If drinking water keeps you away from high-calorie drinks, it can certainly help you lose weight. However, adding more water to your diet without changing anything else in the regime will likely make no difference in lowering the numbers on the scale.



**YOUR EVERYDAY WELLNESS – HEALTHY FUN**

# A Guide to Exercise If You Have Heart Disease

Regular exercise not only prevents heart disease, but also reduces premature death in people with heart disease. In fact, the chance of exercise triggering a cardiac arrest or heart attack is extremely low. However, those with long-standing heart disease who wish to take up exercise for the first time should see their doctor first. The aim is to tailor the intensity of activity to the individual.

Meanwhile, here are some exercises that benefit heart patients:



## Aerobic exercise

People with heart disease should exercise on most days, totalling at least 150 minutes per week of moderate intensity exercise. Aerobic exercise is an endurance exercise that involves continuous movement of your large muscles (like your legs). Choose an aerobic activity such as walking, swimming, light jogging, or biking. Moderate intensity means increasing your heart rate and breathing rate but still being able to hold a conversation.

## Resistance training exercise

Not every heart disease patient has the same health condition. For people who are obese, have high blood pressure or diabetes, it is recommended to include strength-building routines in addition to aerobic exercise. For example, lifting light weights at least three times a week.

Resistance weight training improves your strength and helps your muscles work together better to burn fat. These exercises are good for you, but keep in mind they do not help your heart like aerobic exercise does.



## Stretching

Flexible exercise keeps your muscles relaxed and your joints mobile. Always do at least five minutes of stretching or moving around to warm up your muscles and heart before performing any form of exercise. Allow time to cool down after you are done with exercise. It is advisable to do the same activity but at a slower pace to maintain heart health.





**YOUR EVERYDAY WELLNESS – TOOLS**

## Learn How to Use an AED

We have all heard about sudden cardiac arrests occurring among fit athletes. It can happen to anyone, at any time and at any place. And if left untreated within minutes, a sudden cardiac arrest leads to death.


We can change this. By learning how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED), you might be at the right place, at the right time to save a life.

What is an AED? It is a lightweight, portable medical device designed to diagnose life-threatening cardiac arrhythmias. It delivers an electric shock through the chest to the heart which can potentially stop an irregular heart beat (arrhythmia) and allow a normal rhythm to resume following sudden cardiac arrest.

How does an AED work? When turned on or opened, the AED will instruct the user to connect the electrodes (pads) to the bare skin of the patient. A built-in computer will check on the patient's heart rhythm through the adhesive pads.

The pads allow the AED to examine the electrical output from the heart and determine if the patient is in a shockable rhythm and whether defibrillation is needed. If the device determines that a shock is warranted, an audible voice prompts the user to press the shock button on the AED.



Watch this [video](#) to learn how to operate an AED. You could be key to saving a person's life. 

## TIPS FROM SUNMED DOCTORS

# The Heart & Gut – Signs To Look Out For

Having young kids around is a wonderful experience to many, but will always be a tricky business. As chatty as they can be, most kids may not be able to explain precisely what is wrong with their body as every discomfort will only be regarded as normal pain. Find out what every parent should look for to early detect unusual heart and stomach conditions in your children.



**Dr Ang Hak Lee**  
Consultant Paediatrician and  
Paediatric Cardiologist

### Signs of congenital heart disease

- Abnormal heart sound (known as heart murmur)
- Blue baby
- Signs of heart failure. For example, breathless, easily tired, laboured breathing and fast heart beat
- Visible heart pulsation



**Dr Nazrul Neezam Nordin**  
Consultant Paediatrician and Paediatric  
Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist

### Signs of gut problems

#### Vomiting

Vomiting episodes commonly occur with many conditions involving almost any system in the body. In relation to the gut, vomiting episodes that happen daily with blood streak or yellowish greenish material is a red flag that parents should take serious action.

#### Prolonged diarrhoea

Diarrhoea episodes that last more than two weeks without any specific cause identified will need to undergo further investigations. This is especially true when it is accompanied by weight loss. Often the stool may be mucousy and blood streaked, that makes it more likely to indicate something serious is going on in the intestine.

#### Abdominal pain

Tummy aches are a very common complaint. This could be associated with minor gut infection but it could also be associated with something more sinister, for example Inflammatory Bowel Disease. Prolonged abdominal pain that happens on a daily basis and particularly severe enough to interrupt night time sleep patterns should alert the parents on something more serious to their child.

TIPS FROM SUNMED DOCTORS

# Asthma in Children – What You Should Know

Asthma is fairly common in Malaysia with five in 100 children being diagnosed with asthma. However, asthma is treatable and only a small number of these children experience severe asthma. Thankfully, most of these children will outgrow asthma over time. As they grow up, the disease is present but their symptoms are usually minimal to none.

## Here are tips for parents with children who have asthma:

### Do not compromise on recurrent chronic cough

Any cough that lasts for more than two weeks without any viral infection is not normal. Parents should immediately bring their child to see a doctor for an assessment and get proper treatment. When the doctor starts treatment, it will usually take 3 to 6 months.

### Keep the environment hygienic

Besides treatment, parents should pay extra attention to their child's environment. Asthma is a disease where a clean environment plays an important role. Be sure to have your home free from small fleas, dust fleas and especially cigarette smoke because asthma can be triggered by air pollution. Children can be easily affected by viral infection and sometimes a change in temperature can also make it worse.



**Dr Norzila Mohamed Zainudin**  
Consultant Paediatrician and  
Paediatric Respiratory Physician





## TIPS FROM SUNMED DOCTORS

# A Father's Day Special To Good Health

In June, we celebrate our fathers – the man who often has little to say but who will always be there for you through your ups and down. Likewise, our doctors will prioritise your health and provide the best advice and treatment but once they go home, they are also devoted fathers to their children.

In this article, we got some of our doctors to share their advice to stay healthy.



“ The brain matters. Don't stop using it! A healthy lifestyle is all essential for your nervous system's wellbeing. ”

**Dr Johan Quah Boon Leong**  
Consultant Neurosurgeon



“ Regular medical check-ups, including blood pressure, glucose and kidney function, is important for identifying disease and monitoring kidney health. ”

**Dr Vincent Wong Chun-Wei**  
Consultant Physician & Nephrologist

“ Eat well, stay healthy, active and fit from young so that in later years you can continue enjoying the same things in life. ”

**Dr Nik Muhd Aslan Abdullah**  
Consultant Clinical Oncologist



“ A good gut takes control of your mood, your weight and your long-term health. ”

**Dr Sheikh Anwar Abdullah**  
Consultant Gastroenterologist  
and Hepatologist



“ Family matters a lot to me and I always look forward to spending time with them. In addition to my hectic work schedule, it's easy to forget to drink enough water throughout the day. I constantly remind myself to stay hydrated, as we all should, in order to keep up with our busy lives. ”

**Dr Tan Guan Hee**  
Consultant Urologist, Urologic  
Oncologist and Robotic Surgeon

“ Investing in bone health is not going to be easy. I'm telling you it's going to be worth it. A healthy outside starts from a healthy inside. ”

**Dr Suhail Suresh**  
Consultant Orthopaedic and Trauma  
Surgeon



SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS

# Heart2Heart: The End Stage Cancer Miracle



Hope can be a powerful force against all odds. Driven by hope, a young mother of three diagnosed with Stage 4 breast cancer overcame her predicament, proving that miracles can happen even with end stage cancer.

Calise had just welcomed their baby daughter into their family of two boys and had not felt anything amiss during pregnancy and after her daughter was born. Yet, a CT and full body scan revealed a lump in her breast, which was difficult to detect due to swelling during pregnancy. When it was discovered, the cancer had spread to her spine, kidneys and other parts of her body.

Without delay, she consulted several oncologists before she met Dr John Low, Consultant Clinical Oncologist at Sunway Medical Centre, Sunway City, whom she decided almost immediately that she would seek treatment from him.

“ I asked the same question to all the doctors I met – what is my survival rate? And Dr John’s response was the only one that gave me hope and confidence. He said that it doesn’t matter which stage of cancer I was in, as long as there is a chance for treatment, I can have a better quality of life,” she said. ”

Dr John recommended Calise to undergo targeted therapy in combination with chemotherapy to treat her cancer quickly and effectively. As Calise is diagnosed with HER-2 positive breast cancer, targeted therapy limits and controls the HER-2 gene from mutating into cancer cells while chemotherapy attacks the tumours’ DNA in order to remove it. This method worked very well for Calise.

She was diagnosed with cancer in July 2020 and after four months of treatment, all cancer cells were cleared from her body. It was truly a miracle! At her first consultation with Dr John, she had to be in a wheelchair and today, she has regained her mobility and improved her quality of life where she can return to daily activities and spend time with her children.

“ We want to live happy and fulfilled lives, so having a good quality of life is important. When I propose treatment options, especially to someone who has end stage cancer, I have to consider the patient’s quality of life. At the end of the day, my goal is not to have my patient live longer but to have them live better,” Dr John said. ”

SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS

## Antenatal Classes For Expecting Parents

Expecting a child is one of the most exciting times in a couple's lives. From the very decision to have children, getting pregnant, childbirth and welcoming a new life, the learning process is endless. Most parents would agree that while there is a lot of joy involved in parenthood, it is not unusual for new parents to feel overwhelmed.

This is where antenatal classes are a valuable experience for couples to learn on the various facets of becoming parents. This is why Sunway Medical Centre's Virtual Parentcraft Classes aim to empower mummies- and daddies-to-be with the knowledge and skills to meet challenges head-on.


The topics covered seek to support couples on labour and delivery, prenatal and postnatal care, care of a newborn, breastfeeding, vaccination, nutrition, fitness and screening of a newborn's hearing.

The classes are facilitated by our obstetricians and gynaecologists, paediatricians and healthcare professionals including the nursing team, dietitians, physiotherapists and speech therapists.

The Virtual Parentcraft Classes are conducted 4 times over the course of the year. The first two classes in March and May were well received by expecting mummies and daddies who participated and if you are also expecting a child, we look forward to having you in our next classes on August 6 and 13, and November 12 and 19.

The classes are split into two sessions and are conducted on Saturdays from 2pm to 5pm. Each class is priced at RM100 per couple, and is complimentary for couples who deliver their baby at Sunway Medical Centre. Couples will also have access to all materials and resources shared during the classes for future reference.



Interested couples can sign up [here](#). 



SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS

# All About Living-Donor Kidney Transplant

## PEMINDAHAN BUAH PINGGANG PENDERMA HIDUP

### Webinar on Living-Donor Kidney Transplant

Sempena Hari Buah Pinggang Sedunia  
In conjunction with World Kidney Day

#### Penyakit Buah Pinggang Peringkat Akhir & Pembedahan Buah Pinggang

End Stage Kidney Disease & Kidney Transplantation



#### Dr Rosnawati Yahya

Pakar Nefrologi  
Pusat Perubatan Sunway,  
Bandar Sunway dan  
Pengaruh Hal Ehwal Perubatan,  
DaVita Malaysia

#### Apa Yang Berlaku Semasa Pembedahan Buah Pinggang Hidup?

What Happens During A Living Kidney Transplant?



#### Dr Murali Sundram

Pakar Urologi  
Pusat Perubatan Sunway,  
Bandar Sunway

#### Penjagaan Kesihatan Diri Sementara Menunggu Pembedahan Buah Pinggang

Keeping Yourself Healthy While on Kidney Transplant Waiting List



#### Dr Tan Li Ping

Ketua Pegawai Perubatan  
DaVita Malaysia



Dengan Kerjasama  
Bersama DaVita Malaysia



In conjunction with World Kidney Day, Sunway Medical Centre partnered with DaVita Malaysia to organise a webinar on Living-Donor Kidney Transplant.

The webinar had more than 350 participants and featured three speakers namely Dr Rosnawati Yahya, Consultant Nephrologist and Dr Murali Sundram, Consultant Urologist at Sunway Medical Centre, and Dr Tan Li Ping, Chief Medical Officer at DaVita Malaysia.

“Kidney transplant is the best treatment for patients with kidney failure as it relieves the patient from undergoing dialysis, allowing the person to have a better quality of life. Most importantly, kidney transplant patients have a longer life expectancy compared to those undergoing dialysis,” said Dr Rosnawati who delivered her talk on End Stage Kidney Disease & Kidney Transplantation.

In his presentation on What Happens During a Living Kidney Transplant?, Dr Murali explained that surgery for living-donor kidney transplant is performed laparoscopically with small incisions. He also shared that 90% of transplanted kidneys will function for 10 years and 70% of kidney transplant patients are able to have a life expectancy of 10 years, compared to only 20% if they continue to stay on dialysis.

“For the new kidney to function and avoid rejection, medication must be taken according to prescription for a lifetime. Also, kidney transplant patients need to pay attention to food safety and hygiene to reduce the risk of infection,” said Dr Tan who presented his talk on Keeping Yourself Healthy While on Kidney Transplant Waiting List.

To increase the number of kidney transplants for more people to lead normal lives, more living donors need to come forward, increasing the number of kidney transplants to be performed by public and private hospitals.

If you have a family member on dialysis, get them to consult their doctor to learn about the benefits and risks of kidney transplant and kidney donation.

Sunway Medical Centre is one of the few hospitals in Malaysia that carry out living donor transplants, with end-to-end service for all parts of the patient's journey. This ranges from donor screening and matching, to surgery and recovery for kidney transplantation. We offer both compatible and incompatible blood type kidney transplantation for end stage kidney disease patients.

**SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS**

# Furthering Medical Know-How

Sunway Medical Centre took part in Malaysia Medical Association (MMA) Wilayah Persekutuan's 18th Primary Care Symposium which was held on 15 February 2022 at the Royale Chulan Damansara.

The event gathered general practitioners, family medicine specialists and medical doctors from various backgrounds and primary health facilities. Numerous topics on cardiology, neurology and orthopaedics were discussed during the symposium.

Our hospital's Consultant Obstetrician & Gynaecologist, Gynaecology Oncology and Robotic Surgeon, Dr Thangesweran Ayakannu presented on Enhancing Patient Care: Role of Robotic Surgery in Gynaecology and Gynaecology Oncology, which was well received by the audience.

Our hospital also set up a booth to showcase the diverse services that we provide such as robotic surgery with da Vinci Xi Surgical System, Mako SmartRobotics and ROSA Knee System.



Dr Thangesweran Ayakannu



SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS

# #SunMedCares: Closing The Care Gap



Having a supportive spouse, a caring parent or an understanding friend is a great way to encourage any patient in their journey to recovery. This echoes the new three-year theme 'Close the Care Gap' which World Cancer Day has introduced for 2022 to 2024.

This new theme encourages people from all layers of society to play a part in cancer care and Sunway Cancer Centre steps up to this call to close the care gap through our nurse counsellors who journey, educate and advocate for patients so they feel empowered in their battle with cancer.

Researchers have found that overall cancer patients' experience with nurse counselling are positive and beneficial. In particular, a nurse's presence and availability, a trusting nurse-patient relationship, human touch and continuity of care were key factors in enhancing healing.

Enter Chiew Lai Yee, Sunway Cancer Centre's Breast Cancer Nurse Counsellor, who spends her time educating patients and their family members about their diagnosis, treatment options, addressing symptoms the patient might be experiencing, and helping them overcome their fears.

“As a nurse counsellor, I provide patient support services and psycho-oncology support for our cancer patients from diagnosis to survivorship. Nurse counsellors are important as we provide mental and emotional support, giving them strength to face their diagnosis head on. I enjoy engaging in this work because it is meaningful and it makes a significant impact on others,” she said. ”

Traditionally, cancer patients prefer the support of family and friends rather than talking to a professional. However, this has changed as more patients now prefer to share their stress confidentially and seek help and support from a nurse counsellor to improve their chances of ensuring a favourable clinical outcome.

“Psycho-oncology support is the biggest gap in cancer care for patients. Once diagnosed with cancer, patients often face a long and hard journey to access care, begin and complete treatment, and adapt to survivorship. During these periods, the absence of supportive care could lead to undesired outcomes and this is why we provide consistent contact for our patients,” Chiew said. ”

And when asked what can be improved in cancer care, she said developing different types of support groups that offer support in different ways is crucial to empower patients to continue on their cancer journey.



Read the full story on Chiew Lai Yee on our [blogpost](#). ✨

SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS

# #SunMedCares: Improving Patient Outcome Through Robotic Surgery



What comes to mind when surgery is mentioned? Surely, the first thought is the cut followed by pain and scarring. The very thought of undergoing surgery is bound to daunt any person. But with the advancement in medical technology, minimally invasive surgeries are now performed, allowing faster recovery.

When Ann (*not her real name*) found she had to undergo a hysterectomy to remove her womb, thoughts of being out for six weeks with a huge scar across her belly and of course, the pain, took over her mind. In her mid-50s, she knew women who had open surgery which took them months to recover.

Ann had gone through menopause in 2020 but in August 2021, she started experiencing light bleeding. Following that, she had heavy period flow in October the same year, which led her to have it checked at Sunway Medical Centre, Sunway City.

She underwent a hysteroscopy with Dr Kannappan Palaniappan, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, and her world came crashing down when she was found to have stage 1 endometrial cancer. She was referred to Dr Thangesweran Ayakannu, Consultant Gynaecologist, Gynaecology Oncology and Robotic Surgeon, whose gentle demeanour and reassurance put her at ease.

“ Dr Thangesweran is a godsend. Walking into his office and discussing my issues with him was one of the best decisions I have ever made. He clearly explained that he will be performing the surgery with the da Vinci Xi surgical system and at the time, I had no idea about the machine at all.

I learned about it from Dr Thangesweran and did some self-study later on. I trusted him completely when he said this sophisticated and advanced surgical procedure is minimally invasive, requiring tiny incisions with minimal trauma in the abdomen, allowing faster recovery,” says Ann. ”

Indeed, she took a good rest after surgery and she started feeling better after two weeks. The surgery left her with five small scar incisions and Ann said she didn't feel different from before she had surgery. In February 2022, she could do light exercises like walking and spin cycling.

“ I can't believe I had a major surgery. I took a few painkillers at night for the first few days after surgery, and that was all. I avoided heavy lifting as advised and I was actually able to move around with ease. Dr Thangesweran said I would get back to my daily life sooner than I thought and he did not disappoint,” Ann said, adding that she hopes her story will help someone going through a similar experience. ”

## SUNMED HIGHLIGHTS

# A Laud To Our Efforts

A little boost of encouragement can lift our spirits and keep us moving forward. And it is these encouragements that spur us to become a hospital with compassionate healthcare professionals who strive to provide excellent care and service to enhance the wellbeing of our patients. Encouragements like the ones shared below are the reason we do what we do.



### Madam Fam

★★★★★ a day ago

I really appreciate the time and patience Jun (Nuclear Radiographer, Sunway Cancer Centre) gave in calming me and explaining the procedures involved clearly. He spent time reassuring me that the procedure is not harmful and reminded me to drink lots of water to expel the trace residue. In fact, two days before the scan, he advised me on how to prepare for it. My husband and I really appreciate his willingness to spend time with me. We feel he is an asset to the hospital. Thank you, Jun.



### Anne

★★★★★ 5 days ago

I have completed my chemotherapy treatment at Sunway Cancer Centre. Yippee! Chemotherapy is not pleasant at all but I am fortunate to have selected Sunway Medical Centre and to have been taken care of by their good oncologist and experienced nurses, especially Dr Christina Lai and nurses at the Oncology Ward. Their patience and etiquette, making a point to remember their patient's name made a huge difference. I want to thank all of them for making my journey a better one.



### B. Tan

★★★★★ a week ago

My expecting wife had pain in her abdomen and was rushed to the ER late at night. The medical officers and nurses were very helpful to help ease her pain and diagnose her condition. They were kind, caring and tended to all our needs including helping me to reduce my anxiety with words of comfort. The Head of A&E, Dr Low Kwai Siong was first to come up with the prognosis of bowel obstruction due to his vast experience in emergencies.



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Saturday : 8:00am – 1:00pm

Closed on Sunday and Public Holiday

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