

B12 Knowledge and attitude on salt iodisation programme in Malaysia among Malaysian adults in Klang Valley, Malaysia

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The national iodine deficiency disorder (IDD) survey reported that Malaysian adults had borderline iodine deficiency. On 30th September 2020, all commercially available household salt in Malaysia were required to undergo iodine fortification, under Regulation 285 of the Food Regulation 1985. As this was a newly implemented initiative, no research has yet to be conducted to assess the public's understanding and perception towards the salt iodisation programme. The objective of this study was to assess the knowledge and attitude on salt iodisation programme in Malaysia. 134 subjects from Klang Valley were recruited and attempted the self-administered online questionnaire. Respondents were predominantly Chinese, female and had tertiary-education. Majority of the respondents had moderate knowledge of salt iodisation programme with a mean knowledge score of 3.1 ± 1.5 , out of seven score. Less than half of the respondents had a positive attitude towards the implementation of the salt iodisation programme. Moreover, an alarming 50% of the respondents said they would increase the amount of iodised salt used in food preparation as means to increase iodine intake. More than half of the respondents felt that they had not received sufficient information from the authorities regarding the salt iodisation initiative. Higher knowledge score was associated with a more positive attitude towards implementation of salt iodisation programme ($p < 0.05$). In this study, the knowledge and attitude regarding salt iodisation programme in Malaysia were unsatisfactory. Nutrition education and health promotion activities on use of iodised salt is paramount to address the low knowledge and to gain public confidence on the fortification programme.