

REBIRTH OF JUMMEC

The year 2005 has been magnificent. We celebrated the centennial anniversary of our university – a remarkable milestone in our history. And, after a hiatus of two years, JUMMEC is now making its long awaited comeback. We aim to make a definite presence in the University of Malaya Medical Centre. Through the publication of JUMMEC, we will be able to disseminate information and learn of each other's work and highlight studies that are particularly relevant in our local context.

As the new Editor of JUMMEC, I see this opportunity as a challenge to revive this journal and share with you all the knowledge, ideas and thoughts presented by those published. There are no limits or boundaries in Medical Science, and in this issue, there is a mix of original and review articles as well as a case report. Wong and Mohd Amin in their paper on "Malaysian Society and Health: Issues and challenges in the 21st century" highlight the health transition from communicable diseases to chronic illnesses – the price we pay for our rapid advancement and development. There are emerging and re-emerging health problems that Malaysia, an aspiring developing country, will have to grapple with. In "Cardiopulmonary Exercise Testing: Utility in research and patient care", Elina *et al* in their review note that cardiopulmonary exercise test, a non-invasive physiological test, is also a valuable tool for assessing therapeutic interventions in heart failure. The use of cardiopulmonary exercise testing in research has led to its extensive clinical usage, particularly in respiratory and cardiovascular medicine, sports medicine, surgery and occupational and rehabilitative medicine. Wan Azman and Haizal then provide an "Overview of peripartum cardiomyopathy" and discuss the challenges that lie in diagnosing and managing this disease.

Original articles in this issue include Chin *et al*'s paper on the "Isolation of *Legionella* from cooling towers and potable water systems in hospital and non-medical buildings in a university campus". Four water samples yielded *Legionella*-like organisms, out of 17 water samples collected, and areas that harbour *Legionella* in a hospital are pinpointed as the authors discuss how serious the implications could be. Monitoring of water supplies and chemical disinfection with oxidizing agents or thermal disinfection should be carried out as preventive measures. Fathihah *et al* in their animal study on the "Antiulcer and cytoprotective effect of *Ageratum conyzoides*-honey combination in rats", demonstrate that honey in combination with plant extracts might be beneficial in the treatment of gastric mucosal injury.

Lifestyle disease is prevalent in today's society, brought about by rapid industrialisation and urbanisation. Moy and Atiya carried out a cross-sectional study of 136 respondents, and uncover a high prevalence of obesity,

co-morbidities (diabetes mellitus and cardiovascular diseases), as well as unhealthy lifestyle practices such as smoking, along with the low prevalence rate of adequate exercise. There is certainly a need for health promotion and education targeted towards increasing awareness of healthy lifestyles. Meanwhile, Noor Azmi and Aniza undertook a retrospective study of 217 term breech infants and consequences on practice, and report a noticeable trend towards Caesarean sections. The authors note that neonatal outcomes of babies born abdominally were statistically better than those born vaginally, but there was little clinical impact.

In the past two decades, cost containment of anaesthesia and surgery as well as changes in surgical practices have led to changes in anaesthetic practice. Chiu *et al* did a "Prospective audit of Desflurane anaesthesia in the University of Malaya Day Surgery Unit" of fifty ASA I-II patients, and found that Desflurane provides controllable anaesthesia and is haemodynamically similar to other commonly used inhalational anaesthetics. Desflurane may be a suitable agent for daycare anaesthesia. Omar did a retrospective study of 102 hands with Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, comparing conservative treatment to surgery. Hands that failed conservative treatment and later underwent surgery tended to have longer duration of symptoms prior to treatment. Surgery offered faster relief from pain and numbness. The author recommends that conservative treatment be abandoned after a trial period of at least three to five months in favour of surgery for speedier recovery. In Loo and Razif's randomised prospective study on "Skin closure using simple interrupted and continuous subcuticular nylon sutures: A comparison of results", eighty patients with closed fracture of radius-ulna or femur were roped in, and the simple interrupted technique was shown to be slower than the subcuticular technique, with higher early post-operative wound complication rate. The authors conclude that the choice of technique did not affect the final outcome of the wound, up to the sixth month post-surgery.

As we dash into the second half of this new decade, the Editorial team welcomes everyone's contribution to fill these pages with fundamental discoveries and innovations and findings that pique us all towards further advancements and greater challenges. The success of a journal depends on our enthusiasm to impart our knowledge, so please, "write away" for JUMMEC. We, the Editorial team will continue to seek exclusive material. You, in turn, are our avid readers, eager submitters, and venerable reviewers. This is your Journal. JUMMEC is now reborn!

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