

Faculty of Medicine Launched Nasopharynx Cancer Detection Tool

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Faculty of Medicine UGM launched NPC test strip, which is a rapid detection method to help diagnose nasopharynx cancer (NPC). Nasopharynx cancer is the fourth of most frequent disease in Indonesia. In the early stages, the symptom is characterized by a chronic runny nose and constant headache while at an advanced stage it is characterized by squint eye and a lump in neck.

One of inventors of NPC test strip, Prof. Dr. Sofia Mubarika, M.Med.Sc., Ph.D., said the NPC test strip can detect early symptoms of nasopharynx cancer. "Early detection is very possible. So far, 80% of NPC patients are at advanced stage," said Sofia Mubarika in NPC test strip launching, Saturday (6/3), at Grha Wiyata Building, UGM.

Mubarika's research in Dr. Sardjito Hospital showed that there were at least 269 cases between 2001-2004. "Now, every year there are 100 new cases with the tendency to be suffered by young people," she added.

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NPC relates with Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) infection. The development of NPC diagnosis is done by using marker to detect EBV. NPC test strip can detect IgG antibody to early antigen (EA) protein. In healthy people, this test will give negative results with 100 percent accuracy. Meanwhile, this test can show the result for NPC's sufferers with about 83 percent accuracy. "We're trying to improve accuracy level and the price of a test strip can be reduced to Rp10,000," she explained.

Examination by NPS strip can be done by taking one drop of patient's blood to test its serum. Blood is diluted with the solution provided in the kit. NPC test strip is then dipped in the solution. Within 3-5 minutes, results can be seen in a form of lines on the strip. "How to use test strips is almost the same as using a pregnancy test strip," she said.

Dean of the Faculty, Prof. dr. Ali Ghuftron Mukti, M.Sc., Ph.D., said that the finding of UGM lecturer's is very useful to detect nasopharynx cancer. In his opinion, the price of this tool can be made cheaper. "The Faculty gives something innovative that has been tested and is more affordable. This can be used by doctors who work in remote areas, health centers, or family doctors," he explained.



Meanwhile, Director of Research and Community Service at Directorate General of Higher Education, Prof. Dr. Ir. Suryo Hapsoro, welcomed the launch of the product. He said that this result belongs to industrial research group and can be used directly by the public.

Suryo also mentioned that several researches in Indonesia are carried out independently and in collaboration institutionally. In 2010, his office works with France to assist scientists in Indonesia. "This year, there has been cooperation with France. Fund is available, but no one has done it," he said.

Suryo also mentioned that the fund in 2010 decreased significantly compared to that in last year. Ministry of National Education is currently seeking additional funds through the State Budget 2010-Amendment." Funds for Higher Education should be the same as in 2009 -1.3 trillion, the largest in history. Now, the House of Representatives has earmarked around 400 billion only," he concluded.

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