

Number of Patients with Leprosy Still High


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The number of people with leprosy in Indonesia is still quite high regardless treatment efforts that have been conducted for these patients. According to Head of Tropical Disease Center (TDC), University of Airlangga (Unair) Section of Leprosy Disease, Prof. Dr. dr. Indropo Agusni, Sp.KK (K), during the last ten years, the number of lepers in Indonesia did not experience a decline.

Currently, there are approximately seventeen thousand new leprosy patients in this country. "Although they have been treated, but the number of patients still increased. This has happened for at least the last ten years," said Indropo in the Indonesian-Dutch Tropical Dermatology Meeting 2011, which was held at the Melia Purosani Hotel on Thursday (7/4).

Indropo added leprosy in Indonesia is an iceberg phenomenon. Treatment and handling are not given to patients in the grassroot level, which are more numerous because they do not show clinical symptoms. The aforementioned clinical symptom is the emergence of specks the size of a coin and numbness. He mentioned several areas in Indonesia with high number of leprosy sufferers, such as East Java, Papua, South Sulawesi, and Maluku. For the number of lepers, Indonesia was ranked third in the world after India and Brazil. "Indonesia is second after India and Brazil related to the number of leprosy patients," he said.

Leprosy disease can affect anyone from children to adults. If treated early, leprosy can be cured completely and does not cause disability. Treatment of this disease takes about 6-12 months with various types of drugs or multiple drugs therapy. The cause of leprosy is bacteria and it can be transmitted through the air, soil, bedbugs, and armadillo. Early detection and adequate testing facilities in various communities is an effective step to control the spread of leprosy. "In addition, when you are infected due to close contact with patients, it's better to be treated immediately if you experience the aforementioned clinical symptoms," said Indropo.



Committee Chairman of the Faculty of Medicine, Prof. Dr. dr. Hardyanto Soebono, Sp.KK (K), mentioned in the seminar that furthermore a workshop will run Netherlands from 7 to 9 April involving approximately 18 skin experts from Indonesia and 18 experts from the Meanwhile, the number of participants reached more than 250 people.

Tropical dermatology is the science of medicine devoted to learning skin diseases that exist and derived from the tropic areas. The disease is now found not only in tropical countries, but also in developed countries because of globalization and population mobility. Most of the tropical skin disease is an infectious disease while others are allergic diseases because of the influence of climate and environment.

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