



**THE REAL LIFE
COMPANY**

Media Release

Healthy Malaysia? Malaysians Disagree

Close to 70% feel their health has worsened over the last 5 years

- *61% want to lose a substantial 8.5 kgs but they are not doing enough to reach their goals*
- *Malaysians desire to do more, and welcome guidance and motivation to sustain healthy behaviours*

Kuala Lumpur, 11 May 2016 – Malaysia scored a mediocre 63 points out of 100 in the 2016 Healthy Living Index - the third wave of AIA's landmark survey of over 10,000 adults across 15 countries in Asia Pacific. The 2016 survey also showed that the 751 Malaysian adults who participated in the survey scored lower (68 points) than the regional average of 73 points when asked if they were satisfied with their health status.

Close to 70% of Malaysian adults felt their health was not as good as it was five years ago. Even more worrying is that 61% of adults under age 30 agreed with this sentiment, although this younger age group should be in the prime of their health. For the first time, the survey also uncovered obesity as a growing challenge for both adults and children.

Those surveyed recognised that healthy living involved a combination of physical elements such as *getting sufficient sleep and eating healthy*, as well as mental aspects such as *maintaining a positive mindset* and *knowing how to reduce stress*. Unfortunately, a key component of healthy living for many in other countries – exercise – did not even feature as one of the top drivers of healthy living among Malaysian adults.

Thomas Wong, Chief Marketing Officer of AIA Bhd. said, "The lack of improvement in Malaysia's Healthy Living Index score, with so many Malaysians feeling unsatisfied with their health, is a big concern. Understanding how adults think and act when it comes to their health is a vital first step to identifying solutions for those concerns.

"The AIA Healthy Living Index also helps us gauge Malaysians' self-awareness. In Malaysia, while there is high awareness about the state of their health and a willingness to do much more to live healthy, the question is whether this has translated to sustainable actions. The survey findings seem to indicate otherwise. Where help is needed are in the areas of guidance and motivation so that Malaysians can get on track and stay on track."

The verdict on diet and nutrition: Bad eating habits are leading to weightier issues, even among children.

Unhealthy eating habits are hampering our efforts to lose weight and live healthy - 86% of those surveyed said they tend to eat when distracted with their screens, 81% admitted to eating unhealthy snacks and 73% had their dinners late.

Attempts to eat healthier are still restricted to the basics of drinking more water (73%) and eating more fruits and vegetables (60%).

Obesity has surfaced as one of the outcomes of poor eating habits: six out of 10 Malaysians surveyed wanted to lose an average of 8.5kgs, which is considered substantial, placing Malaysia among the top three countries with the highest weight-loss targets. More than half (55%) of the survey participants in Malaysia were either pre-obese or obese, based on their Body Mass Index readings.

Equally worrying is that 17% of Malaysian parents wanted their children to lose at least 4.5 kgs, indicating that unhealthy habits are steadily taking root even among the younger generation.

There is also a pre-conception that healthy food is more expensive (81%); does not taste very good (64%) and is harder to prepare (58%).

The scoop on exercise: Malaysians exercise regularly but they spend much more time on their screens!

Malaysian adults (69%) said they exercise regularly. They spend an average of 2.6 hours a week exercising - this is lower than the regional average of 3 hours and the minimum 3.5 hours a week recommended by most fitness experts.

Interestingly, Internet and smartphone usage showed up as the barriers that are preventing Malaysians from getting enough exercise and sleep. On average, adults here spent an average of 4.1 hours a day on the Internet for non-work related pursuits - one of the highest number of hours recorded in the region. This is a sharp contrast to the 2.6 hours a week Malaysians spend exercising.

About 68% of respondents claimed that they are addicted to online activities, much higher than the regional average of 57%. This addiction trend will continue to be fuelled by children growing up with the Internet and social media as integral aspects of their lives. Currently, 50% of Malaysian parents claimed that their children had too much screen time – TV (44%), time spent online (31%) and playing video games (26%).

It's perhaps not surprising then that Malaysian adults are sleep deprived. While they wish to get 7.5 hours of sleep a night, in reality, they only enjoy 6.3 hours - the lowest among the 15 countries-surveyed.

Health concerns rank high, but the majority don't know the true state of their health.

The majority of those surveyed said diseases related to the heart, diabetes, cancer and stroke among their top health concerns. Many were also worried about their mental well-being: 76% were concerned about anxiety, 74% about depression and 72% about Alzheimer's/senility.

Despite those concerns, only 46% of Malaysian adults had a medical check-up done in the last 12 months. This is lower than the regional average of 52% and a decline from previous years (52% in 2011 and 50% in 2013).

There is a desire to do more, and they welcome guidance and motivation to sustain healthy behaviours.

Many (91%) Malaysian adults admit that they can definitely do more to improve their health. It's encouraging that 75% said they have taken some small steps in that direction. Only 15% confessed that they have not done anything to improve their health.

What would motivate them and reinforce more healthy behaviours? Seeing tangible results: such as wanting to feel better physically (about 90%), mentally (88%) and look better (85%).

Adults in Malaysia welcome guidance that would help them change one step at a time (84% said this); setting smaller and more achievable goals (79%); getting updates on their progress (76%) and earning rewards for achieving their goals (73%). For those who had not taken any steps towards healthy living, 75% said not knowing what goals to work towards was the main obstacle, once again indicating the very real need for guidance.

Thomas Wong commented, "The health status of Malaysians shows much scope for improvement and we can clearly see that there is a strong desire to improve their health. It's encouraging that many want more motivation and guidance on how to set their goals and stay healthy.

With rising medical costs, people must be encouraged to make healthier lifestyle choices. At AIA, we want to do more than simply pay claims; we want to play an active role in empowering and incentivising Malaysians to make sustained changes to their lifestyles on a daily basis so that we become a healthier nation."

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About AIA Bhd.

AIA Bhd. is a leading insurer in Malaysia, where we have been privileged to do business since 1948. We offer a suite of financial solutions including Protection, Health, Personal Accident, Employee Benefits, General Insurance, Mortgage, Retirement and Family Takaful products to meet our customers' protection and financial security needs at every life stage. Through our wide and diverse distribution footprint which comprises a 14,000-strong Life Planner force, our exclusive bank partner's branches nationwide as well as corporate sales teams and brokers, we give our customers the choice of deciding how, when and where they connect with us.

Part of the AIA Group, the largest independent publicly listed pan-Asian life insurance group, AIA Bhd. has the financial strength, experience, service centre network and a well-trained team of more than 2,000 staff to serve our 3 million customers nationwide. As at 30 November 2015, AIA Bhd.'s total asset worth was RM47 billion, with a paid-up capital of RM767 million.

About AIA

AIA Group Limited and its subsidiaries (collectively "AIA" or the "Group") comprise the largest independent publicly listed pan-Asian life insurance group. It has a presence in 18 markets in Asia-Pacific – wholly-owned branches and subsidiaries in Hong Kong, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, China, Korea, the Philippines, Australia, Indonesia, Taiwan, Vietnam, New Zealand, Macau, Brunei, a 97 per cent subsidiary in Sri Lanka, a 49 per cent joint venture in India and a representative office in Myanmar and Cambodia.

The business that is now AIA was first established in Shanghai almost a century ago. It is a market leader in the Asia-Pacific region (ex-Japan) based on life insurance premiums and holds leading positions across the majority of its markets. It had total assets of US\$168 billion as of 30 November 2015.

AIA meets the long-term savings and protection needs of individuals by offering a range of products and services including life insurance, accident and health insurance and savings plans. The Group also provides employee benefits, credit life and pension services to corporate clients. Through an extensive network of agents, partners and employees across Asia-Pacific, AIA serves the holders of more than 29 million individual policies and over 16 million participating members of group insurance schemes.

AIA Group Limited is listed on the Main Board of The Stock Exchange of Hong Kong Limited under the stock code "1299" with American Depositary Receipts (Level 1) traded on the over-the-counter market (ticker symbol: "AAGIY").

About AIA Healthy Living Index

Launched in 2011, the AIA Healthy Living Index is a survey conducted to understand how people feel about their health and the extent of their health habits, as well as their concerns and hopes for a healthier way of life. Commissioned by the AIA Group and conducted by TNS, an independent, global research company, each survey involved interviews with over 10,000 adults 18 years or older (including 751 adults in Malaysia) across 15 markets : China, Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Korea, Taiwan, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Australia, New Zealand and Sri Lanka.

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