



# MMA ‘deeply concerned’ over food poisoning cases

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**Malaysian Medical Association president Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz says not enough attention is being given to hygiene and food handling.**



MMA president Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz said food is being prepared in unhygienic conditions while many food stalls and caterers are known to be operating illegally. (File pic)

## **PETALING JAYA:**

The spate of recent food poisoning cases nationwide is deeply concerning, the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) said.

“We are deeply saddened that in many of these cases young children were affected. From these reports, it is clear that not enough attention is being given to hygiene and food handling.

This is one particular area we are most concerned about. Our local cuisine is ranked among the best in the world, but the same can’t be said about our standards of food hygiene, especially in our street food outlets,

MMA president Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz said in a statement today.

She said it is common to see no separation in the handling of food and money.

“In many outlets, food is being prepared in unhygienic conditions while many food stalls and caterers are known to be operating illegally. What are the authorities doing about it?

Occasionally, a restaurant is closed by the authorities and the owner is slapped with a fine, but we see no improvement. Everyone closes one eye and carries on, she said.

Azizan said it might seem cruel to stop single parents from eking out a living

but we should insist that anyone selling food be licensed to do so. Meanwhile, she said, all vendors must be educated in food hygiene standards.

All food premises must comply with the Food Hygiene Regulations 2009. Training in food handling is compulsory, she said, adding that the health ministry must prioritise this issue.

Azizan said the ministry must also include tighter scrutiny of typhoid vaccinations for food handling staff, ensuring everyone is inoculated and their vaccination is properly registered.

There are unregistered typhoid vaccines on the market being used by unscrupulous parties. The authorities have conducted several raids but the issue has persisted, she said.