

Medical groups debunk claim mRNA vaccines modify DNA

By **FMT Reporters** - March 7, 2022 6:25 PM

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PETALING JAYA: Fourteen medical groups have debunked a claim that the mRNA (messenger RNA) in certain Covid-19 vaccines can modify human DNA.

They said a laboratory study from Lund University, Sweden, had generated excitement among anti-vaxxers claiming that the Moderna vaccine could reverse transcribe itself into DNA in a liver cell.

“The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines work by instructing our cells to produce viral proteins, which in turn trigger the production of long-lasting antibodies that form the defence against future infections with SARS-CoV-2,” they said referring to the coronavirus that causes Covid-19.

“SARS-CoV-2 is an RNA virus, which does not have the means to produce a DNA transcript or integrate itself into a host’s genome,” the groups said in a statement, adding that it was not biologically possible for mRNA vaccines to reverse transcribe themselves into human DNA.

The groups include the Malaysian Medical Association, the Association of Private Hospitals Malaysia, the Malaysian Pharmacists Society and the Malaysian Health Coalition.

They said the Swedish experiment used cancer cells that behaved differently from normal human cells.

They also said a close analysis found that the investigators did not provide any evidence of genome integration as claimed.

‘Not a zero-risk choice’

Meanwhile, the groups also set the record straight on the occurrence of serious side effects among children and adolescents from Covid-19 vaccines.

They said myocarditis was the only major Adverse Events Following Immunisation (AEFI) as a result of mRNA vaccines in children aged five to 11, pointing out that all the children recovered fully after two to seven days.

“By contrast, the risk of developing myocarditis in a child with Covid-19 is 36 times higher than that due to the mRNA vaccine.

“Covid-19 also causes a severe form of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C), often requiring care in ICU.

“At the end of the day, it is about parents and guardians making informed choices.

“Unfortunately, it is not a zero-risk choice. But the science and evidence show that a five to 11-year-old child is at the highest risk of developing myocarditis if he or she gets MIS-C,” they said.

The groups said they were frustrated and disappointed by “the antics of a few of our colleagues” who were lending their voices to anti-vaccination groups.

They urged the authorities to take stern action against anti-vaccine activists who continued to alarm the public with fear-mongering, fake news and misinformation.