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## In healthcare experts we trust

**A**nti-vaxxers. These are the people who disagree with the use of vaccines for a number of reasons. Some view it as an infringement of their human rights while others believe that the vaccines are unsafe and ineffective. And, of course, we mustn't forget those who will buy into any conspiracy theory.

In the light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the online anti-vaccine movement and anti-vaxxers have been criticised for putting the rest of us at risk.

Now, considering that most Malaysians — myself included — are usually ignorant about our rights (whether citizen's, worker's, voter's or shareholder's),

I think we can categorise the anti-vaxxers in Malaysia into two groups.

The first are those who are genuinely concerned about how the Covid jab will affect them — perhaps because of their health condition or age — as the vaccines are relatively new,



even though they have been approved by the authorities.

People in the second group like to blindly forward and share all sorts of things on social media without doing any research or verifying anything. Instead of turning to science to come to grips with the pandemic, they certainly have their own ways to do so. It's little wonder that most Malaysian students shy away from the science stream.

Despite assurances from healthcare officials and scientists around the world that the vaccines are safe, the anti-vaxxers think they know more than the experts.

But who can blame them, really?

About two years ago, I had a fever and my body was aching. So, I dragged myself to the doctor, hoping for an explanation and advice on what to do.

Without even bothering to use his stethoscope and thermometer on me, the young doctor, whom I was consulting for the first time, spent the next 10 minutes lecturing me about the benefits of running and jogging.

"You know ah, last time ah, I was also like you. Always feeling tired, body ache, sometimes even chest pain and having difficulty in breathing. But I tell you what: Later, you go to FRIM (the forest reserve in Kepong), put on a running jacket and jog one round. Trust me, you will feel much better after sweating!" he told me.

Nodding my head, I thought to myself, "Come on la, I can barely walk, now he wants me to run? What kind of doctor is this? Can he just cut that out and give me a jab, medicine or something?"

Now, some of you might be wondering why I went to this young doctor. Well, my regular doctor — older and more experienced — has become so "ancient" that he doesn't seem to know what he is talking about. The last time I went to him because of a stomach ache, he told me to go home and "eat porridge with jam".

Going back to the anti-vaxxers, I really don't want to be too harsh on them. Who knows what is in their minds? I guess when people are fearful, it is easy to be misinformed or misled.

And this is exactly what healthcare experts have been advising the public — get educated and make a decision. After all, there is sufficient scientific data today to counter the anti-vaxxers' concerns.

Fortunately, anti-vaxxers, much like flat Earthers, are in the minority. Many people, including myself, are probably too lazy to find out more about the Covid vaccines. We just trust the system, and do what the experts tell us to do. Perhaps we need a little bit of herd mentality to achieve herd immunity.

Although some doctors may ask you to exercise when you are sick or to eat jam with porridge, I still believe it's wiser to trust the healthcare experts — at least they are not politicians.

So, come on, guys, just listen to the experts and get vaccinated. ■