enhanced in the humid and warm Malaysian weather. Axillary 3α-androstenol levels in women is postulated to play a role as a synchronising pheromone and it is found to show menstrual variation; the highest concentration of this compound being produced in the mid-follicular phase, prior to ovulation. Recently research has shown that axillary compounds from women in this phase of the menstrual cycle shorten both the time to ovulation and the length of the menstrual cycle, whereas in the ovulatory phase they lengthen both these parameters. Therefore 3α-androstenol is a possible pheromone included in axillary compounds secreted in the follicular phase. Morofushi et al. demonstrated that all the synchronised women in their study could detect 3α-androstenol, however in the present study the ability to smell the putative pheromone, 3α-androstenol, was found to be similar in synchronised and non-synchronised subjects.

Other glands believed to secrete pheromones are located in the vagina. Genital scents are said to be the most potent in attracting the opposite sex. The present study shows that the hygiene score was lower among synchronised subjects, suggesting that other chemicals present in the vaginal discharge or menstrual blood flow might play a role in synchrony.

We studied the effect on menstrual synchrony of other scents such as cigarette smoke, soap scent and male or female perfume, none of which were found to be significantly different between the two groups of synchronised and non-synchronised partners.

**Conclusions**

Menstrual synchrony was found in 59% of our study population. However, the ability to smell 3α-androstenol was found to be similar between the two groups of synchronised and non-synchronised subjects. Other chemical compounds present in menstrual blood or vaginal discharge might be responsible for the synchronisation since the personal hygiene score was found to be lower in synchronised subjects.