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## Single mum is puzzled how daughter, 10, got HIV

JOHOR BARU, Malaysia: A 39-year-old single mother is puzzled how her daughter was born with the human immuno-deficiency virus (HIV) although the rest of her family have tested negative for the virus.

The girl, who is now 10, had been in and out of hospitals for the past eight years due to frequent bouts of lethargy and difficulty in swallowing food.

Blood tests had been regularly done on her daughter.

"But it was only late last year that a doctor told me that she was HIV-positive.

"This came as a shock to me," the mother said.

Worse, she was told that her daughter, the second of three children, had only six months to live.

"Although I am heartbroken knowing that she is suffering, I have vowed to make this Ramadan and Hari Raya Aidilfitri something for her to remember and be proud of," said the woman tearfully.

But how did her daughter con-

tract the virus in the first place?

The woman said blood tests had been carried out among her two other children and her former husband.

"The blood tests were all negative.

"So where did my daughter get the virus from?"

"Moreover, she is suspected to have contracted the virus from the time she was born. Even the doctors could not give proper answers to my queries," she said.

Recounting the events that led to the diagnosis of her daughter's condition, the woman said she had first taken her daughter to a specialist hospital to find out why she was always lethargic and had trouble eating.

"But the hospital could not determine my daughter's ailment," she said. "It was only after going for another treatment at another private hospital that I was told the bad news.

"I am very upset to know that

after eight years of frequenting hospitals, it was only last year that my daughter's actual condition was diagnosed.

"The doctors carried out tests for other diseases such as chikungunya and dengue, but the tests were all found to be negative.

"If I remember correctly, no blood transfusion took place during my delivery. So how could she have been infected at birth?"

Puteri Wangsa state assemblyman Datuk Abdul Halim Suleiman visited the family and handed over some cash assistance for Ramadan.

The woman, who is a clerk, said her daughter still attended morning school regularly but had quit religious school in the evening since she was too tired.

"I hope there is someone out there who can help me find out the cause of my daughter's infection," she said.

The girl is now on free medication supplied by a government hospital.