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Virgin claims getting AIDS via the dentist

KUALA LUMPUR: A 20-year-old virgin who does not do drugs and has not had any blood transfusion but has tested HIV-positive, is believed to have contracted the virus during a visit to the dentist.

The woman, a Malaysian working in Singapore, tested positive last month when she went for health screening before renewing her work permit. She broke down on the spot when told of the test result. "Her whole world was shattered (by the news)," said a relative of hers.

The woman is now back in Malaysia after a second test confirmed she is HIV-positive.

It was a rare case, the doctor who examined the woman discussed it with his colleagues and was surprised to learn that a similar case was detected in August. The patient was a Malaysian man in his 20s. There are some striking similarities in the two cases. Both patients have no sex

experience, no blood transfusion and are not into drugs, but have visited dentists in Malaysia recently for tooth extraction.

"The doctor told us that if the instruments used by dentists are not cleaned thoroughly and sterilised, HIV can be spread from one patient to the next," said the woman's relative.

It is learnt that the two cases had been referred to the Singapore Health Ministry. Health Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai has shown deep concern about the two cases. He said the ministry will take appropriate measures to handle them.

The Malaysian AIDS Council said although AIDS virus can be spread during dental treatment if strict standard of infection control is not followed by a dentist, the chances are very small, and the public should have no fear of going to the dentist.