

Headline **Dental clinics taking action on HIV scare**
Date **15 Nov 2010**
MediaTitle **The Star**
Section **Nation**
Journalist **N/A**
Frequency **Daily**
Circ / Read **304,904 / 1,026,812**

Language **English**
Page No **L-N47**
Article Size **108 cm²**
Color **Black/white**
ADValue **1,961**
PRValue **5,882**



Dental clinics taking action on HIV scare

RECENT media reports about someone allegedly contracting HIV after dental treatment has caused a public scare, resulting in a fall in the number of patients at dental clinics in Malaysia.

I would like to appeal to the public at large not to be alarmed. The Health Minister has assured that the ministry will take appropriate measures to handle such cases and we will only be 100% sure as to where the cause of infection came from after complete investigations by the Oral Health Division.

At the moment, it is not definite that these two HIV cases were the result of tooth extractions.

I would like to assure the public that all dental clinics registered with the ministry follow the rules laid down regarding infection control.

All clinics have autoclaves for sterilisation of dental instruments and dentists are using disposable needles, cups, bips, gloves, masks, etc.

In fact, dentists are more at risk than patients, and we take maximum care to protect ourselves and the patients. The chances of a patient getting infected with the Aids virus in a dental clinic are thus very slim.

As stated by the Malaysian Aids Council, although the virus can be spread during dental treatment if strict 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.

Do not be unduly worried and continue your dental treatment without fear.

The dental charges have gone up due to the precautionary measures taken by the dentists in Malaysia, and the increase in costs of instruments and dental materials.

DR JASPALL SINGH,
President, Malaysian Private
Dental Practitioners' Association.