



## Instructions for Patients of Illegal Dentists

If you or a family member have received dental treatment from someone who is not registered to practise dentistry in B.C., this letter contains important health information and instructions.

You can check whether any dentist is qualified to practise in B.C. by entering their name in CDSBC's online Directory of Dentists at [www.cdsbc.org](http://www.cdsbc.org) or by calling 604-736-3621 (1-800-663-9169 toll free in B.C.). If your dentist's name is not listed, they are practising illegally and your health is at risk.

### Why this matters

Registered dentists have demonstrated that they are qualified to practise and must follow strict infection control precautions. They must stay current in their practice, they carry malpractice insurance, and they must follow standards and guidelines for patient care.

- Visiting an illegal dentist puts you and your family at risk for bacterial and viral infections, including Hepatitis B and C, and HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus).
- The illegal dentist may have used materials that are not approved for use in Canada and may be detrimental to your health.
- The treatment provided may be of poor quality, which can lead to additional dental problems and may ultimately impact your overall health.

### What to do

We ask that all patients of illegal dentists take this letter to a doctor and ask to be tested for Hepatitis B and C virus and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). If you do not have a doctor, take this letter to a medical clinic, or call Healthlink BC at 811. We also recommend that you visit a registered dentist to review the dental work done and the materials used.

Do not wait to be contacted by a public health official. In most cases, we do not know the names or contact information of patients who have visited illegal dental practices so we cannot follow up with you individually. This letter is your notice that you should seek testing as soon as possible.

There is no charge to be tested. If you are not covered by B.C.'s Medical Services Plan, you can arrange to have the testing done for free by the public health office in your area.

For more information about testing, please contact Healthlink BC by calling 811.



### **How to find a registered dentist**

If you are looking for a dentist, the British Columbia Dental Association offers a referral service through its website, and includes a number of search options. Visit [www.bcdental.org](http://www.bcdental.org) or call 604-736-7202 (toll free 1-888-396-9888).

### **Affordable dental care**

The cost of dental care may be a factor in making a choice to seek treatment from an illegal dentist. Most dentists in B.C. will make special payment arrangements for patients in financial need. In addition, many registered dentists donate their time at free or reduced-cost dental clinics around the province. For a listing, go to the BC Dental Association website at [www.bcdental.org](http://www.bcdental.org) and search for “reduced cost clinics”.

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