

# HIV scare at Danish hospital after washing machine flaw

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A Danish hospital said Thursday it had offered HIV and hepatitis tests to 719 patients after discovering a flaw in a special washing machine that could entail exposure to the viruses.

"The risk is minuscule, but we have offered the patients tests if they so wish," senior surgeon Ove Bendtsen at the Slagelse Hospital, southwest of Copenhagen, told AFP.

Bendtsen said that the specialised washing machine for cleaning probe scopes used in gastro-enterological surgery had been delivered with a faulty rinsing [nozzle](#) lacking an opening.

"The contents of the [washing machine](#) were washed properly, but the rinsing mechanism to get rid of the soap did not function," Bendtsen said, pointing out that the flaw entailed a theoretical risk that viruses were present on the scopes when surgery was performed.

The incident has been reported to health inspectors, who required direct information sent to all 719 patients who had undergone surgery using probes washed in the flawed machine, which was in use for nine months leading up to March this year.

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