Foreign mouthwash gets recalled by Singapore authorities

Yvonne Bachmann

HONG KONG/LEIPZIG, Germany: Health authorities in Singapore have issued a public health warning to customers and medical professionals about imported mouthwash found to be contaminated with bacteria of the *Burkholderia cepacia* complex. Several unsold batches of Oral Guard Antiseptic-Antiplaque mouthwash, imported by Medimex Singapore Pte Ltd and distributed by IBS Pharmaceuticals Limited, were recalled after the country’s Health Sciences Authority (HSA) detected irregularities in three samples of the product during regular quality testing in November.

According to an HSA press release, the affected mouthwash is manufactured by Group Pharmaceuticals Limited, an Indian pharmaceutical company based in Mumbai, and labelled for use as an antiseptic aid for treating oral conditions such as inflammation of the gums, dental plaque, mouth ulcers or a sore throat. It is currently available in a limited number of retail stores and distributed to dental clinics, specialist institutions and general medical hospitals throughout the country.

Medimex has refused to provide the exact numbers of the recalled products, the newspaper *Strait Times* reports.

*Burkholderia cepacia*, a so-called gram-negative bacillus, is usually found in moist environments such as water or wet soil. It is considered harmless to healthy people but can pose health problems for people with weakened immune systems or chronic lung disease. *Burkholderia cepacia*-related infections often lead to a rapid decline in lung function and result in death.

The HSA has advised customers and health professionals nationwide to stop using the mouthwash until further notice and seek medical attention should they feel unwell after using the product.