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Health

Doctor in Carving Case Soon Had New Job

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An obstetrician who carved his initials into a woman's abdomen at Beth Israel Medical Center after delivering her first baby in September worked for two months at a Queens women's clinic performing abortions after being dismissed from both the hospital and his former practice, the clinic's president said yesterday.

The obstetrician, Dr. Allan Zarkin, was hired last November by the Choices Women's Medical Center in Long Island City, Queens, to perform abortions and general gynecological care, including prenatal exams, said Merle Hoffman, the clinic's president. At that time, the State Department of Health had already begun an inquiry into Dr. Zarkin's treatment of previous patients, including Dr. Liana Gedz, 31, the carving victim.

While the State Health Department posts the names of doctors it has disciplined on its Web site, that site does not show the malpractice history of doctors or list disciplinary actions, including dismissals, that hospitals have taken against physicians. There is no other clearinghouse for this information. Ms. Hoffman said she learned about the carving incident in December only after receiving a court summons addressed to Dr. Zarkin at her clinic.

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