



HSA ALERT: THREE WEIGHT LOSS PRODUCTS SOLD ONLINE FOUND TO CONTAIN BANNED SUBSTANCE SIBUTRAMINE; TWO CONSUMERS EXPERIENCED ADVERSE EFFECTS

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is alerting members of the public not to purchase or consume three products marketed online for weight loss. Contrary to their claims of being “natural” or “herbal”, HSA’s analysis of these products found that they contained high amounts of sibutramine, a banned toxic substance which can cause serious adverse effects when consumed. The three products are:

- “Nature Slim”
- “Slimming Seven Days by Figure Up”
- “Energy Booster Figure-Up New Look Strong Version”

Please refer to **Annex A** for photos of the products analysed by HSA.

2 The products were sold on a local e-commerce platform, Shopee. HSA has worked with the platform administrator to remove the affected listings and warned the sellers.

Two consumers experienced dry mouth, extreme thirst and other adverse effects after taking products

3 A consumer took “Nature Slim” for two months and experienced rapid heartbeat, dry mouth and extreme thirst. She was informed by her friend that these symptoms were normal as the product was advertised to “enhance metabolism”. The product was also marketed as a “traditional preparation” that is “clinically proven” for “advanced weight loss” and to “control appetite”. However, the consumer became suspicious after she read from HSA’s past press release that the adverse effects she experienced could be due to the presence of sibutramine, and reported it to HSA.

4 “Slimming Seven Days by Figure Up” was marketed as a “traditional” product that is “used to reduce body weight and fats” and “suppress appetite”. A consumer experienced dry mouth, extreme thirst and insomnia after taking it for a few days.

5 HSA’s analysis detected very high levels of sibutramine in “Slimming Seven Days by Figure Up” and “Energy Booster Figure-Up New Look Strong Version”. Sibutramine is a prescription only weight loss medicine banned in Singapore since 2010 due to an increased risk of heart attack and stroke. Other serious health consequences reported with its use include heart problems and central nervous system disorders (e.g., psychosis and hallucinations). HSA had previously received serious adverse effect reports of consumers experiencing hallucinations or hearing voices, palpitations and breathlessness after consuming slimming products adulterated with sibutramine. In one of the cases, a consumer experienced an extremely fast heart rate and became unconscious after taking a product adulterated with sibutramine. She was resuscitated and suffered debilitating consequences requiring the implantation of a defibrillator (a medical device) to help her heart to function.

Illegal weight loss products carried false and misleading claims and logos

6 The products were labelled to contain herbal ingredients such as green tea, cactus and raspberry extracts. In addition, “Slimming Seven Days by Figure Up” was labelled as “100% natural” while “Nature Slim” was labelled to contain a “botanical extract”. The products were also falsely labelled with “GMP” logos, which may mislead consumers into believing that the products are safe and manufactured under high quality standards certified by Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP).

Advisory to consumers

7 Consumers are advised to:

- Stop taking these products immediately and consult a doctor if you feel unwell or are concerned about your health.

- Be wary of products that claim to be “100% herbal”, “100% natural”, “clinically proven” or guarantee weight loss within days. They can contain potent ingredients that can seriously harm your health.
- There is no quick and easy way to lose weight. Weight control should be achieved through a combination of balanced diet and appropriate exercise. If you need help managing your weight, please consult your doctor or dietitian.
- Do not buy products from unknown or unverifiable sources, and exercise caution when buying online or from overseas as you cannot be certain where and how these products were made and whether they have been adulterated with harmful ingredients. Adulterated products are often manufactured under poor conditions with no quality control. Different batches of the same product may contain variable amounts of ingredients and/or different types of adulterants. These products may appear well-packaged or labelled as certified to meet quality standards, but these are tactics used by unscrupulous manufacturers to falsely portray that the products are safe and of good quality, when in fact they can contain potent ingredients which can seriously harm your health.
- If buying online, only buy from reputable pharmacies or retailers’ websites or those with an established retail presence in Singapore.

Advisory to sellers and suppliers

8 All sellers and suppliers must stop selling these products immediately. HSA will not hesitate to take stern enforcement actions against anyone who sells and supplies products found to be adulterated with banned substances or potent ingredients. Sellers and suppliers are liable to prosecution and if convicted, may be imprisoned for up to 2 years and/or fined up to \$10,000.

9 Members of the public who have any information on the sale and supply of these illegal products may contact HSA’s Enforcement Branch at Tel: 6866-3485 during office hours (Monday to Friday) or email: hsa_is@hsa.gov.sg.

About the Health Sciences Authority (HSA)

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) applies medical, pharmaceutical and scientific expertise through its three professional groups, Health Products Regulation, Blood Services and Applied Sciences, to protect and advance national health and safety. HSA is a multidisciplinary authority. It serves as the national regulator for health products, ensuring they are wisely regulated to meet standards of safety, quality and efficacy. As the national blood service, it is responsible for providing a safe and adequate blood supply. It also applies specialised scientific, forensic, investigative and analytical capabilities in serving the administration of justice. For more details, visit <http://www.hsa.gov.sg/>.

For more updates on public health and safety matters, follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/HSAsg.

About HSA's Health Products Regulation Group

The Health Products Regulation Group (HPRG) of HSA ensures that drugs, innovative therapeutics, medical devices and health-related products are wisely regulated and meet appropriate safety, quality and efficacy standards. It contributes to the development of biomedical sciences in Singapore by administering a robust, scientific and responsive regulatory framework.

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Photos of “Nature Slim” that was tested by HSA



Photos of “Slimming Seven Days by Figure Up” that was tested by HSA



Photos of “Energy Booster Figure-Up New Look Strong Version” that was tested by HSA

