



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
PRESS RELEASE
4 APRIL 2017

HSA ALERT: CONSUMER DEVELOPED DIABETES & OTHER ADVERSE REACTIONS AFTER TAKING 'PHQ 1001 KHASIAT PENAWAR HERBA QASEH SERATA HERB' WHICH CONTAINS UNDECLARED POTENT WESTERN MEDICINES

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is alerting members of the public not to purchase or consume 'PHQ 1001 Khasiat Penawar Herba Qaseh Serata Herb'. A consumer developed serious steroid induced side effects and diabetes after taking it.

2 The product was marketed as a traditional herbal remedy for a variety of medical conditions such as pain, impotence, kidney diseases and stroke. However, it was tested by HSA to contain multiple undeclared potent western medicines, including dexamethasone, piroxicam, griseofulvin and paracetamol. This product is sold on social media platforms and overseas websites, and some consumers may have obtained it through their friends or relatives. Please refer to [Annex A](#) for pictures of the product, and [Annex B](#) for more information about the possible adverse effects of potent ingredients found in the product.

3 A Malay female in her 60s took the product for her knee pain and obtained rapid relief of the pain. However, she experienced rapid weight gain and developed a puffy face after consuming it regularly for a few months. She was diagnosed with diabetes and Cushing's syndrome (a condition caused by prolonged ingestion of steroids, characterised by the appearance of round face or 'moon face' and upper body obesity with thin limbs). These medical conditions are likely to have been caused by the presence of dexamethasone (a potent steroid) in the product. The consumer had obtained the product through a social media platform. According to her doctor, a few of the consumer's friends, who also consumed the product, experienced weight gain, which was likely to have been caused by the steroids in the product.

Consumer advisory

4 Members of the public are advised to:

- Consult a doctor as soon as possible if you are taking 'PHQ 1001 Khasiat Penawar Herba Qaseh Serata Herb', as it has been tested to contain a potent steroid. Sudden discontinuation of steroids without proper medical supervision can cause serious withdrawal symptoms such as fatigue,

confusion and low blood pressure, especially when these products have been taken for more than a few weeks.

- Exercise caution when purchasing health products online or from sources which you may not be familiar with, even if they are recommended by well-meaning friends and relatives. You cannot be certain where and how these products were made, or what ingredients they contain.
- Be wary of complementary health products (e.g. health supplements, traditional medicines) that promise or produce quick results for chronic medical conditions, such as fast pain relief. They may be adulterated with prescription medicines that should only be taken under medical supervision. Consult your doctor or pharmacist if you need help for the management of your chronic medical conditions.

Members of the public are encouraged to visit www.healthdangers.sg to learn more about the dangers of buying illegal health products from questionable sources.

Sale and supply of illegal products

5 Sellers must stop selling 'PHQ 1001 Khasiat Penawar Herba Qaseh Serata Herb' immediately. It is illegal to sell and supply complementary health products containing undeclared potent western medicines. Anyone who supplies such products is liable to prosecution and if convicted, may be imprisoned for up to 3 years and/or fined up to \$100,000.

6 Members of the public who have any information on the sale and supply of 'PHQ 1001 Khasiat Penawar Herba Qaseh Serata Herb' or other 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.

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SINGAPORE
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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/>.

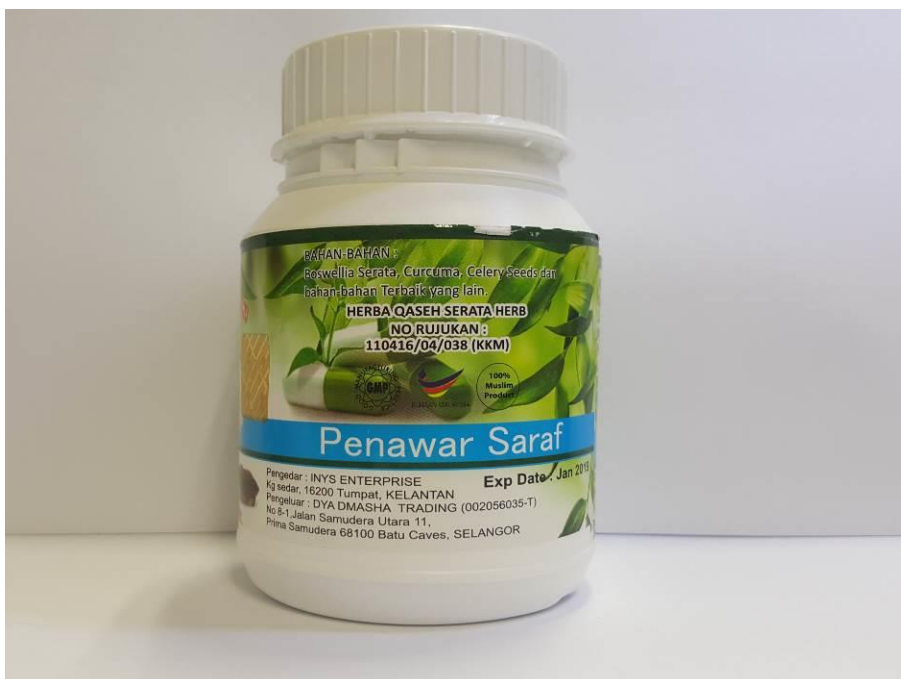
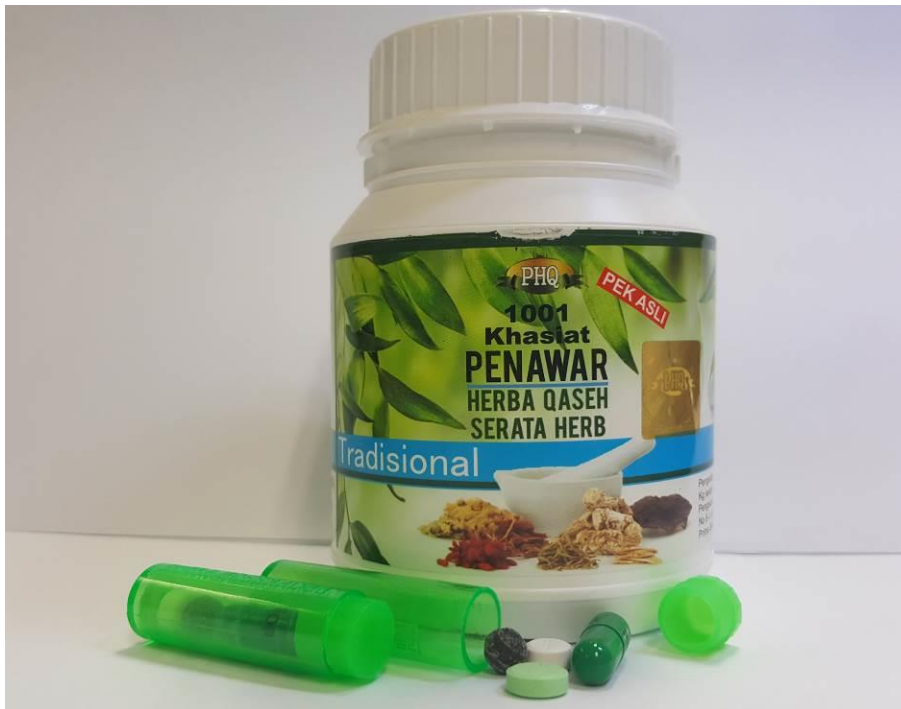
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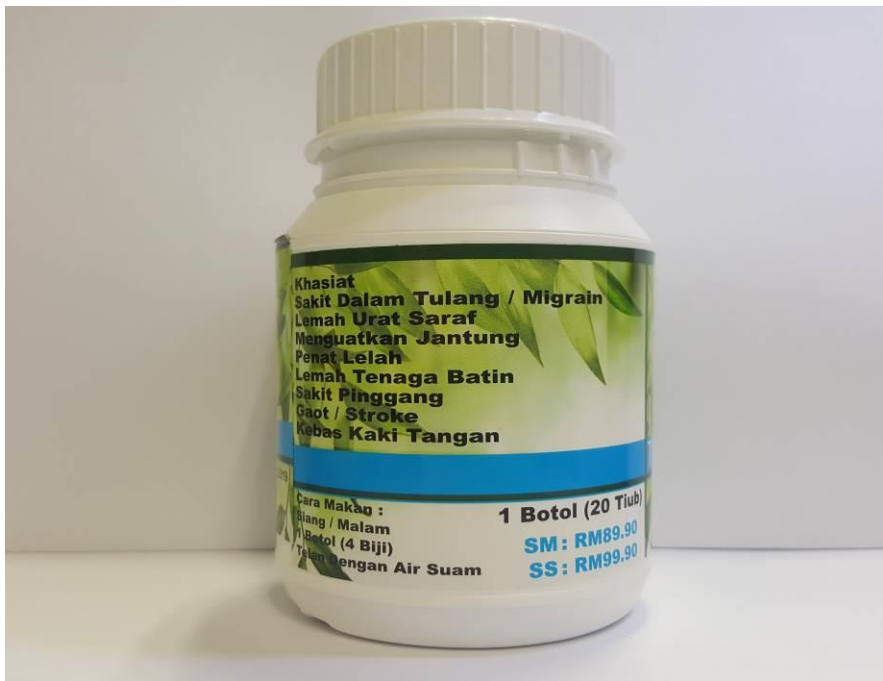
About HSA's Health Products Regulation Group

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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'PHQ 1001 Khasiat Penawar Herba Qaseh Serata Herb'





ANNEX B

Possible adverse effects of undeclared potent ingredients found in the illegal product

Undeclared Ingredients	Possible Adverse Effects
Dexamethasone	Dexamethasone is a potent steroid. Long term use of steroids without medical supervision can cause Cushing's syndrome, high blood pressure, diabetes, an increased risk of infections.
Piroxicam	Piroxicam is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) used to treat pain and inflammation. It can cause gastrointestinal adverse effects such as nausea and vomiting and gastric bleeding as well as elevated liver enzymes. (Other adverse effects that can occur with prolonged usage include heart problems and fluid retention.
Griseofulvin	Griseofulvin is an antifungal drug. Adverse effects include headache, stomach upset and skin rashes. Serious adverse effects such as liver injuries and Stevens-Johnson syndrome (a life-threatening condition characterised by painful rashes, blisters, and peeling of the skin) have been reported in patients taking griseofulvin.
Paracetamol	Paracetamol is available over the counter for the relief of fever and pain. Rare adverse effects include hypersensitivity reactions such as rash.