



## **HSA SEIZED OVER 1 MILLION ILLEGAL HEALTH PRODUCTS AND REMOVED MORE THAN 2,300 ONLINE LISTINGS IN 2025**

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) seized more than 1,060,000 units of illegal health products in 2025, an increase of about 10% from about 970,700 units seized in 2024. In 2025, HSA also found and removed 2,358 online listings of illegal health products sold on local e-commerce and social media platforms, down from a high of nearly 12,500 listings in 2023.

### **Illegal products seized through ground operations**

2 Most of the illegal health products seized through ground operations in 2025 were cough syrups (56%), sexual enhancement medicines (19%) and sedatives and painkillers (17%), similar to the top three types of products seized in past years. They had an estimated total street value of more than \$750,000. Examples of sedatives and painkillers seized included benzodiazepines, opioids, muscle relaxants and anti-convulsants for epilepsy treatment. (Refer to Annex - Fig. 1 for Top 3 Types of Illegal Health Products Seized in 2025, Fig. 2 for Estimated Street Value of Top 3 Types of Illegal Health Products in 2025, and Fig. 3 for Number of Illegal Health Products Seized in 2023 to 2025).

### **Illegal Product Listings Online Decreased Over Past Three Years**

3 With the increasing popularity of e-commerce and social media platforms as modes of retail, HSA has been stepping up surveillance and employed technology such as automated bots for the faster detection of illegal health products listings. As a result of the greater surveillance, HSA has observed that it served to discourage such listings. The total number of listings of illegal health products in 2025 dropped to 2,358,

its lowest over the past three years compared with 12,474 listings in 2023, and 7,190 in 2024.

4 The platforms where illegal health products were listed for sale were a mix of e-commerce marketplaces (Shopee and Lazada) and social media platforms (TikTok), reflecting the diverse digital landscape where such listings may appear. Based on HSA's monitoring, Shopee, Lazada and TikTok were the top three online platforms that had the most listings of illegal health products. (Refer to Annex - Fig. 4 for Top 3 Online Platforms with the Most Illegal Health Product Listings Posted in 2025). HSA continues to collaborate closely with the administrators of e-commerce sites and social media platforms to take down listings of illegal health products and issue warnings to offenders.

5 In 2025, HSA issued 1,372 warnings to individual sellers. Hair and skin products, antibiotic/ antifungal/ antiviral products, nasal aspirator/ nebuliser, diagnostic kits, and contact lenses were the most common product listings removed in 2025. (Refer to Annex - Fig. 5 for Most Common Product Listings Removed Online in 2025). Some examples of hair and skin products were prescription medicines that include topical acne preparations containing azelaic acid, adapalene and tretinoin, while others were unregistered anti-hair loss products. HSA would like to remind the public that prescription medicines should only be obtained from a doctor or from a pharmacy with a valid prescription and should be taken under medical supervision. They may pose serious health risks if consumed without medical supervision.

6 Sexual enhancement medicines and contact lenses topped the products that had related online listings removed in 2023 and 2024 respectively. (Refer to Annex - Fig. 6 for Percentage of Most Common Product Listings Removed in 2023, Fig. 7 for Percentage of Most Common Product Listings Removed in 2024, and Fig. 8 for Percentage of Most Common Product Listings Removed in 2025).

7 A significant decrease has been observed for the listings removed for sexual enhancement medicines (32% of total listings removed in 2023 to 2% in 2025) in the past three years. For contact lenses, the number of listings removed decreased by 3

times from 24% of total listings removed in 2024 to 8% of total listings in 2025. This was due to intensified online surveillance by HSA and e-commerce platforms to take down such illegal listings after reports on consumers who had experienced adverse effects from contact lenses surfaced in 2024. The results reflect HSA's continuous efforts to collaborate with platforms to proactively identify and remove offending products online.

### **Significant Cases that were Prosecuted or Undergoing Investigation**

8 In 2025, HSA prosecuted 18 persons for the sale and supply of illegal health products.

9 One example was the case of Soh Eng Keng, 24, Singaporean, who was caught for the illegal possession of cough syrups, sedatives and opioids, with the intention to sell them in Geylang. Investigations revealed that a syndicate recruited Soh to peddle the illegal products for a daily pay of \$160. During the course of investigations, he re-offended twice. He was prosecuted and was sentenced to 38 weeks' imprisonment on 23 October 2025.

10 On 26 August 2025, a 41-year-old Singaporean, Mohammed Akil Abdul Rahim, was sentenced to 11 months' jail in Singapore's first conviction for the sale and supply of etomidate powder. He had been caught on 1 December 2024 with enough powder to make over 70 pods. HSA officers uncovered the illicit items in Akil's home. Etomidate was regulated under the Poisons Act but was reclassified as a Class C drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act from 1 September 2025, bringing harsher penalties for abusers and traffickers. HSA also highlighted that etomidate-laced vaporisers, had been detected in accident cases reported in the media.

11 To protect the public from the harms of illegal health products, HSA works closely with local and overseas partners through field and online surveillance, intelligence sharing and enforcement operations. For example, in November 2025, a 23-year-old foreign national was caught for attempting to smuggle about 11,500 units of addictive prescription medicines including sedatives and painkillers valued at

approximately \$12,000 in street value, at Changi Airport Terminal 3. These medicines were intended for illegal distribution in Singapore. The offender was detected by Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) officers, who then referred him to HSA officers. Investigations are ongoing.

12 In another case of smuggling of illegal health products, a 39-year-old Malaysian, Thurairaj Vengu, was detained at Woodlands Checkpoint in February 2025, while attempting to smuggle 15,000 tablets of Milam® Midazolam 7.5mg into Singapore using his motorcycle. He was recruited in Malaysia and tasked to deliver the sleeping tablets to a rubbish collection centre at Tekka Market in return for a RM300 reward. He was prosecuted and sentenced to 19 weeks' imprisonment on 27 March 2025. This was the highest penalty for the import of benzodiazepines in 2025.

### **Importance of public reporting on suspected adulterated or harmful products**

13 Everyone has a part to play to protect our safety and health through providing feedback on suspected adulterated and harmful products and reporting of adverse events. Public vigilance and reporting helps HSA to act swiftly on cases of illegal health products and protect the public against further harm. We urge the public, healthcare professionals, and the industry to provide information on such suspected products. In a case in November 2025, a courier company alerted HSA on two suspicious crates at their storage facility. The overseas shipments, intended for delivery to two separate addresses in Yishun, were deceptively labelled as a well-known household bleach but contained suspected codeine-based cough syrup. HSA conducted simultaneous enforcement operations at both delivery addresses on the same day and seized over 106 litres of codeine cough syrup worth about \$29,000. Based on preliminary investigations, a 43-year-old Singaporean male importer had orchestrated the illegal distribution to both locations for financial gain. Investigation is ongoing.

14 We have alerted the public to eight illegal products through media releases in the past year, 14 illegal products in 2024 and 15 illegal products in 2023. The products detected in 2025 were with potent medicinal or banned ingredients, with steroids being most commonly detected. In total, HSA has received more than 30 cases of feedback

and reports of adverse effects associated with these products over the past year. This includes serious cases that required hospitalisation. However, there may be cases that were not reported to HSA and therefore not detected.

15 The following are two examples brought to HSA's attention from feedback and reports of adverse effects.

- In November 2025, HSA alerted members of the public not to purchase or use "HW Beauty Serbuk Campuran Kurma, Madu & Limau Kasturi" and to seek medical attention if they had consumed the herbal product. Members of the public had provided feedback that the product unexpectedly provided instant pain relief. HSA also received several suspected adverse event reports associated with it. These included serious events of acute kidney injuries and Cushing's syndrome, a serious medical condition characterised by a round face or "moon face" appearance. Two patients were hospitalised. HSA's tests revealed that the product contained two potent steroids (dexamethasone and prednisolone) and an anti-inflammatory painkiller (diclofenac).
- In March 2025, HSA alerted the public about nine reports of serious skin rash following inappropriate consumption of modafinil or armodafinil, in the period of February 2024 to February 2025. All nine consumers had obtained modafinil and armodafinil from street peddlers in Geylang or from friends and consumed them without a doctor's prescription and medical supervision. They were taken to improve alertness or "boost energy and health". Six developed Stevens-Johnson syndrome and the other three developed toxic epidermal necrolysis. After HSA alerted the public to these cases, HSA received another five reports of serious skin reactions with modafinil or armodafinil use.

16 HSA had also informed the public regarding health products imported by companies and detected with potent medicinal ingredients. These companies had worked with HSA to recall the products, which included herbal products that should not be expected to produce immediate, dramatic effects on medical conditions as they are products that support general wellness and are unlike western medicines. These cases included:

- In July 2025, HSA directed Da Zhong Tang Pte Ltd and Chinese Medical Centre Pte Ltd to stop the sales and conduct a consumer recall of all batches of “皮得康 (Pi De Kang) Dermatitis Cream”. The product was tested by HSA after receiving feedback from a consumer and it was found to contain two potent medicinal ingredients, a steroid (clobetasol) and an antifungal (miconazole).
- In May 2025, HSA also alerted members of the public not to consume “CuraLin advanced glucose support” which was labelled to contain traditional herbs but was tested by HSA to contain two undisclosed prescription anti-diabetic medicines: glibenclamide and metformin. LYC Nutrihealth (Singapore) Pte Ltd had imported two batches of the product from the United States of America, and it was marketed to “help support healthy blood glucose levels”, “promote energy levels”, and “help support carbohydrate & fat metabolism”. HSA directed LYC Nutrihealth (Singapore) Pte Ltd to stop all sales and recall both batches of “CuraLin advanced glucose support”.

(Refer Annex for selected photos of illegal health products).

## **Advisory**

17 HSA Chief Executive Officer, Adjunct Professor (Dr) Raymond Chua said: "HSA has continually enhanced our capabilities in surveillance and enforcement to curb the sale and distribution of illegal health products in Singapore. This includes strengthening our partnerships in areas like intelligence exchange with our counterparts overseas, which could better help to disrupt the supply chains for these products. The feedback we get from members of the public on such products also help to ensure timely action against them. However, we would also like to remind everyone that such products can in fact harm one's health, and consumers should not buy them from unreliable or unauthorised sources."

18 Consumers are advised to be **ALERT** when purchasing health products to minimise your risk of obtaining potentially adulterated or harmful products:

- **AVOID** Dubious Products: Steer clear of products from unknown or unverified sources, especially online - they may contain harmful ingredients.
- **LOOK** for Reputable Sellers: Buy from trusted pharmacies or retailers with an established presence in Singapore.
- **EXAMINE** Claims: Be cautious and wary of products that claim to have miraculous results, or “no side effects”. In addition, consumers should always be cautious of effects that seem too good to be true, regardless of its source.
- **REPORT** Suspicious Products: Help protect others by reporting dangerous or dubious products to HSA.
- **TRUST** Medical Advice. Consult a healthcare professional if you need help managing your chronic medical conditions instead of risking your health with use of unfamiliar products.

19 HSA takes a serious stand against illegal activities involving health products. Anyone caught importing, manufacturing and/or supplying illegal health products is liable on conviction, to an imprisonment term for up to 2 years and/or fined up to \$50,000.

20 Members of the public are encouraged to report any illegal activity involving illegal health products to the Enforcement Branch of HSA at Tel: 6866-3485 from 8.30am to 5.30pm (Monday to Friday), or e-mail: [hsa\\_is@hsa.gov.sg](mailto:hsa_is@hsa.gov.sg).

**HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY  
SINGAPORE  
24 MARCH 2026**

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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.

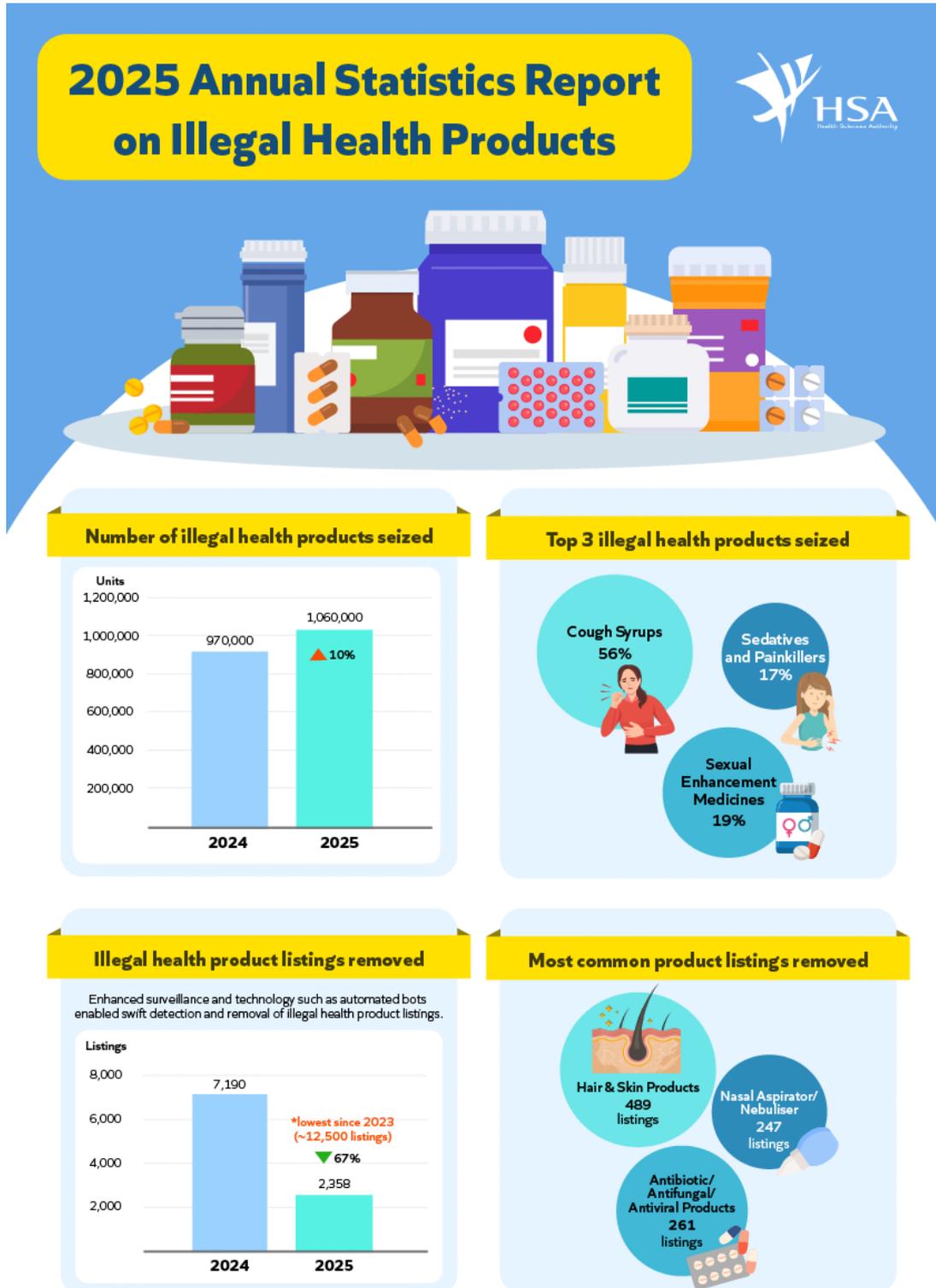
For more updates on public health and safety matters, follow us on social media: [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#) and [YouTube](#).

### **About HSA's Health Products Regulation Group**

The Health Products Regulation Group (HPRG) of HSA ensures that medicines, 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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**Infographic**



## Charts

Fig. 1: Top 3 Types of Illegal Health Products Seized in 2025

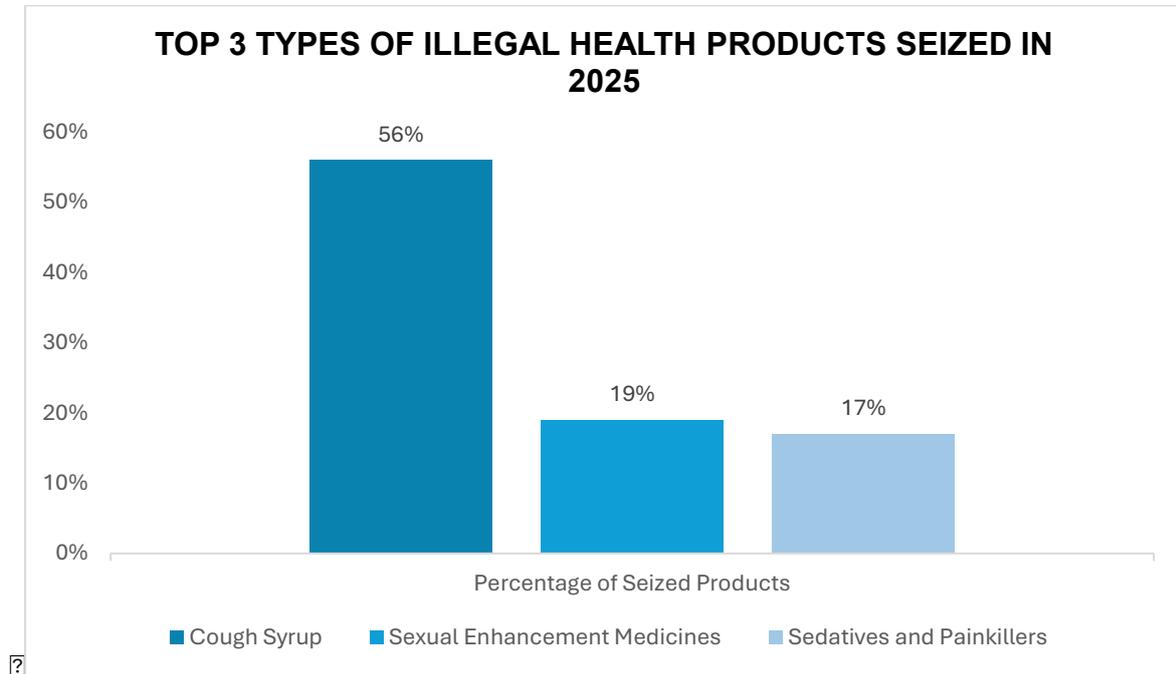
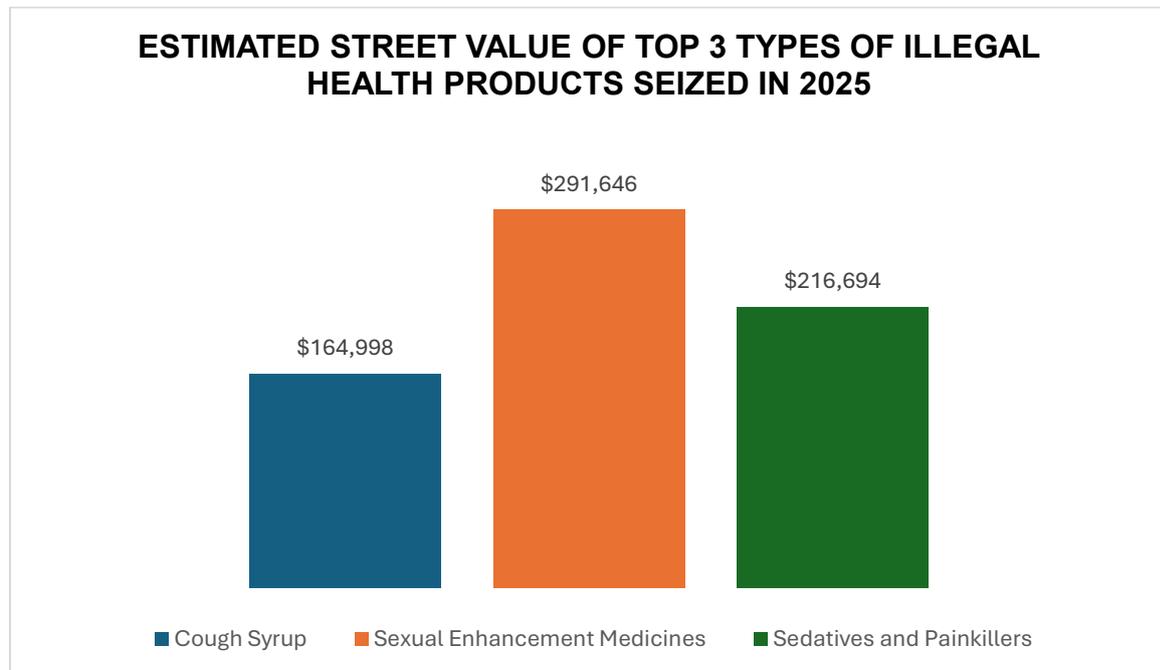
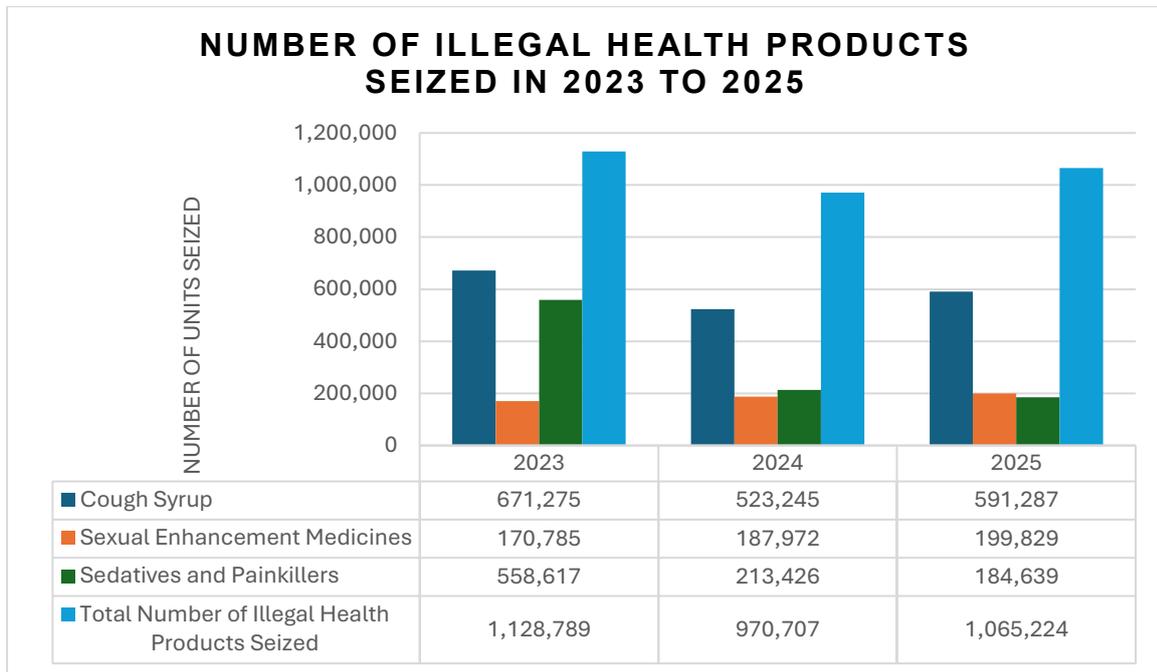


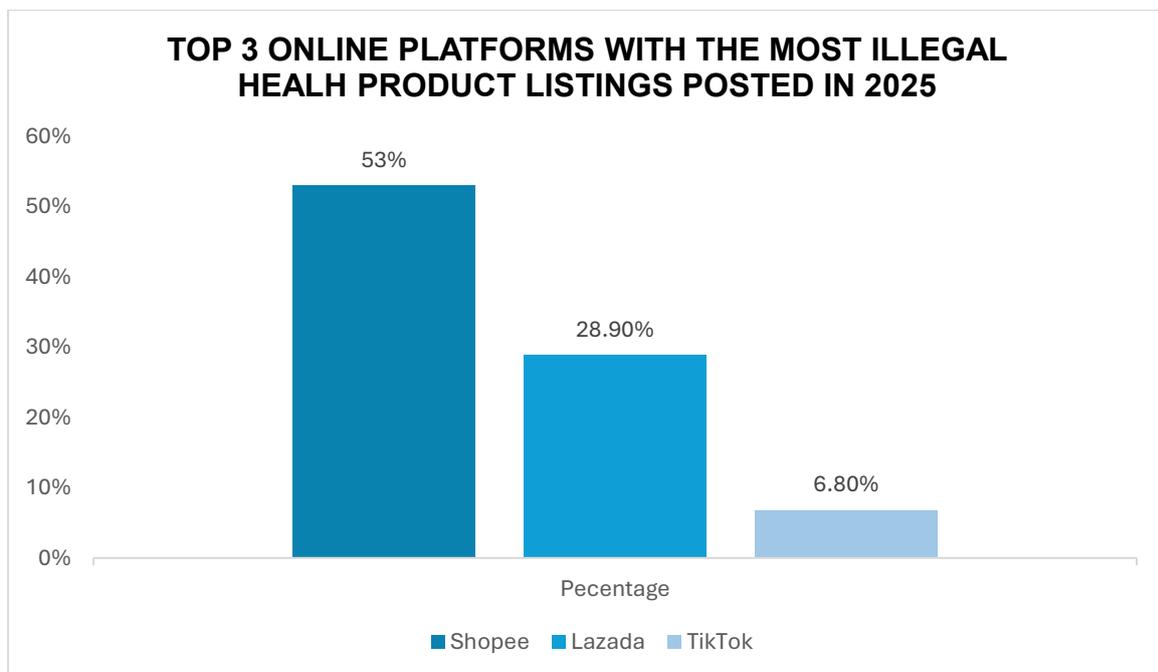
Fig. 2: Estimated Street Value of Top 3 Types of Illegal Health Products Seized in 2025



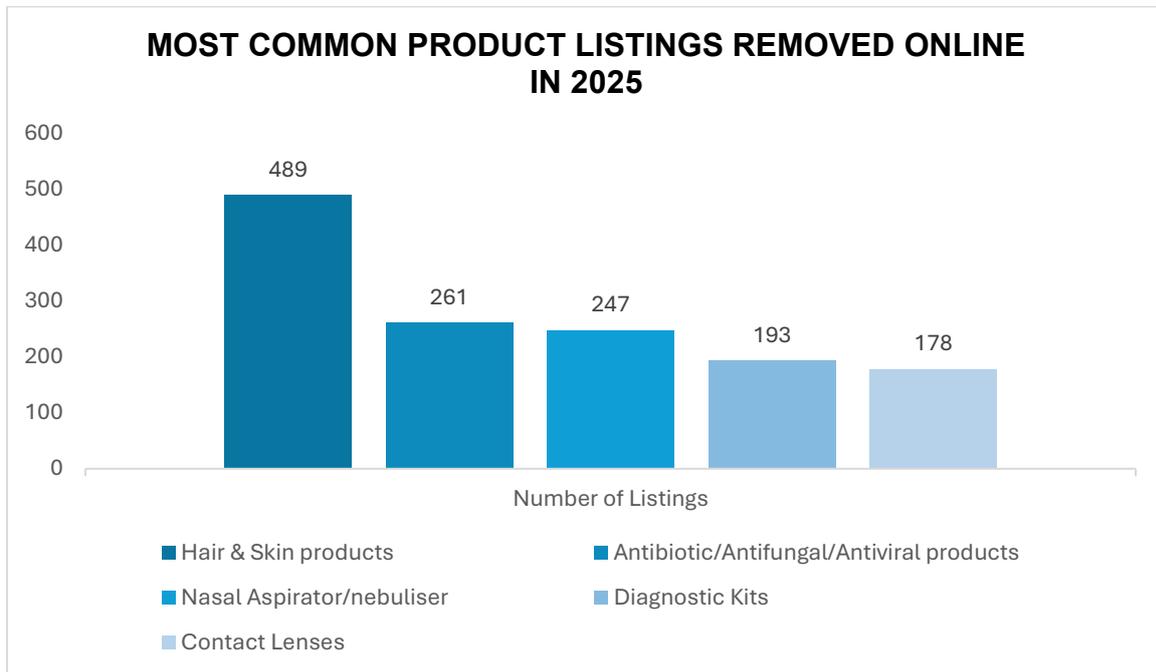
**Fig. 3: Number of Illegal Health Products Seized in 2023 to 2025**



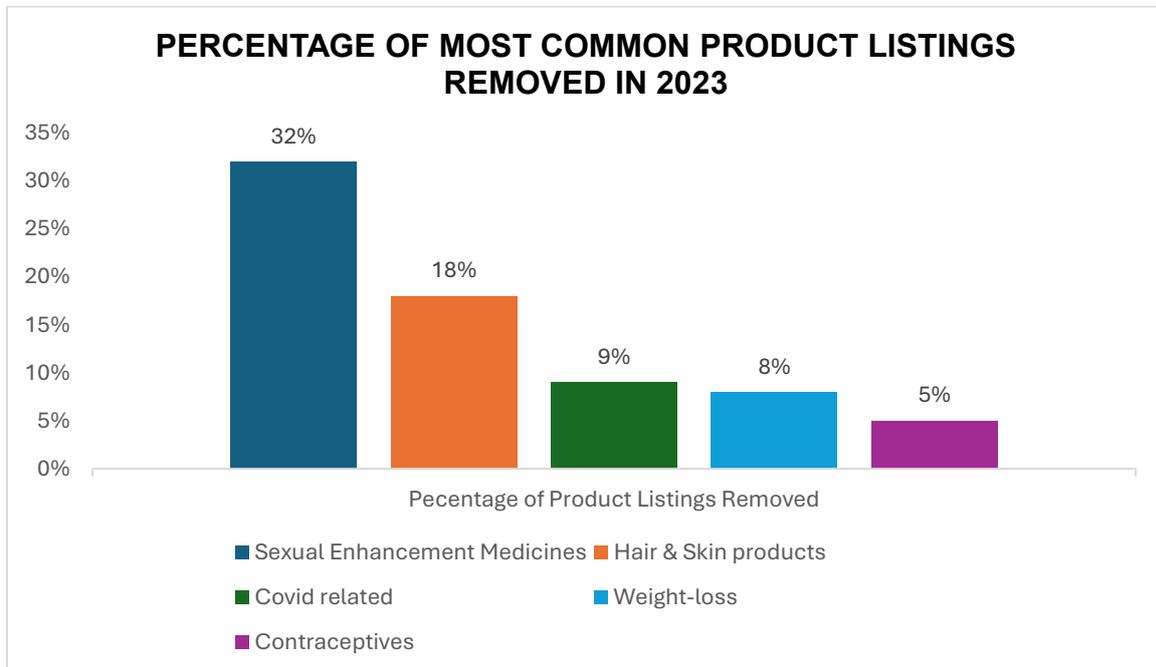
**Fig. 4: Top 3 Online Platforms with the Most Illegal Health Product Listings Posted in 2025**



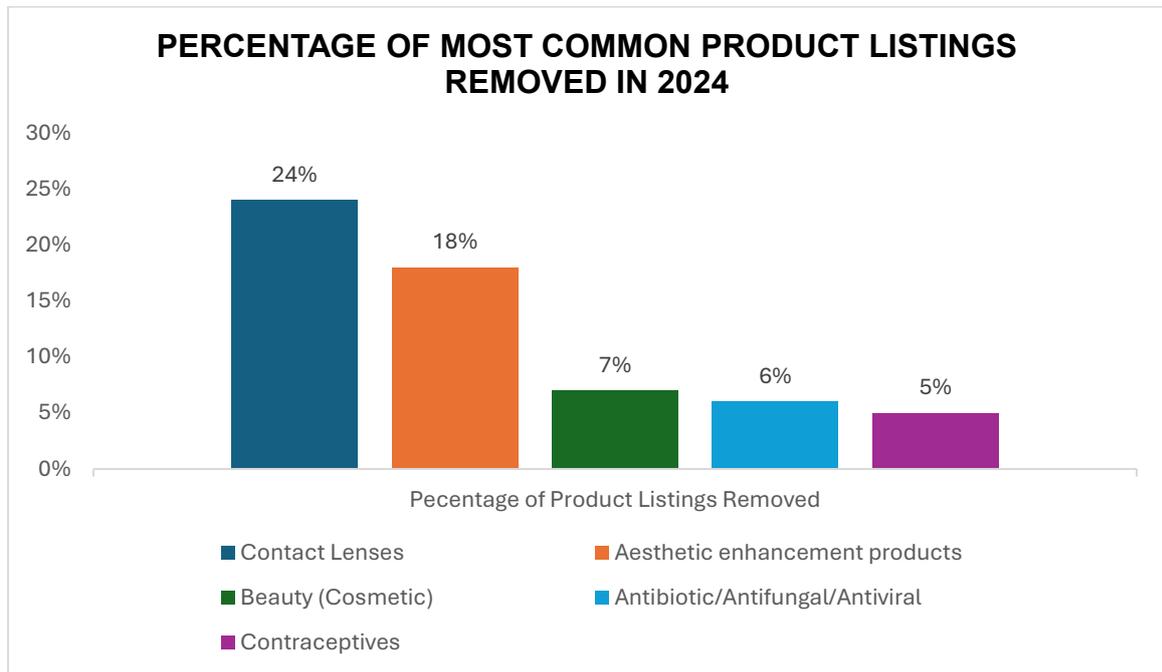
**Fig. 5: Most Common Product Listings Removed Online in 2025**



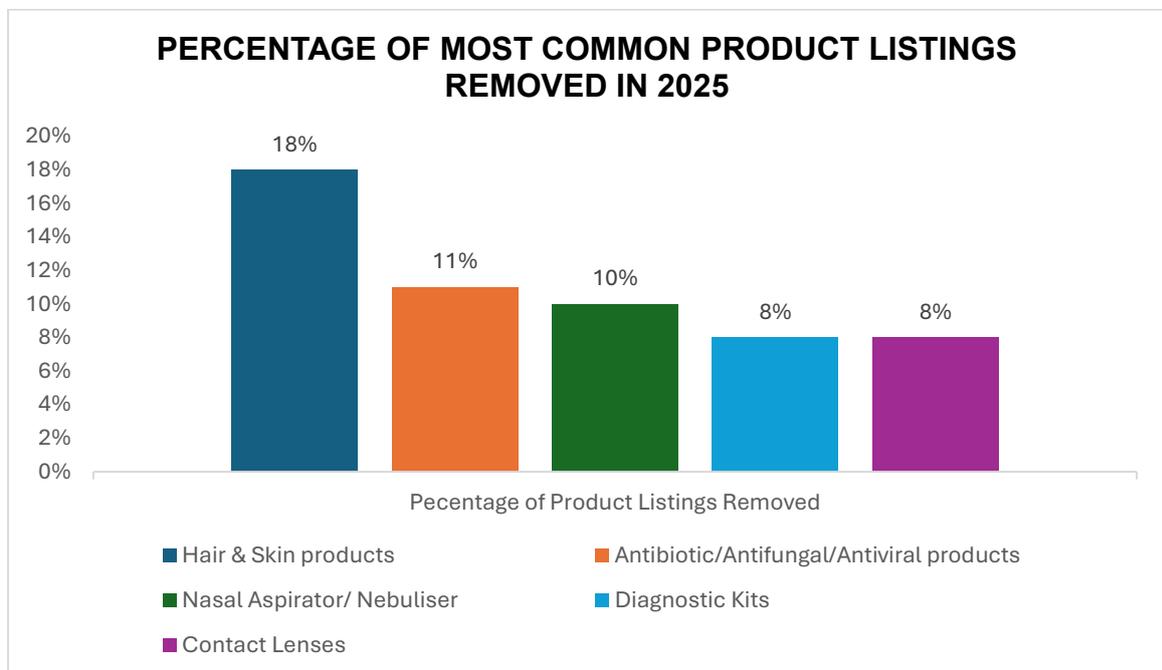
**Fig. 6: Percentage of Most Common Product Listings Removed in 2023**



**Fig. 7: Percentage of Most Common Product Listings Removed in 2024**



**Fig. 8: Percentage of Most Common Product Listings Removed in 2025**



**Photos of Illegal Health Products detected by HSA**

**Photos of illegal cough syrup, prescription medicines and manufacturing equipment seized during raids**

Illegal cough syrup and prescription medicines seized from an enforcement operation at a residential unit in Joo Chiat on 5 December 2025



Cough syrup in bleach bottles seized from operations in Yishun on 17 November 2025



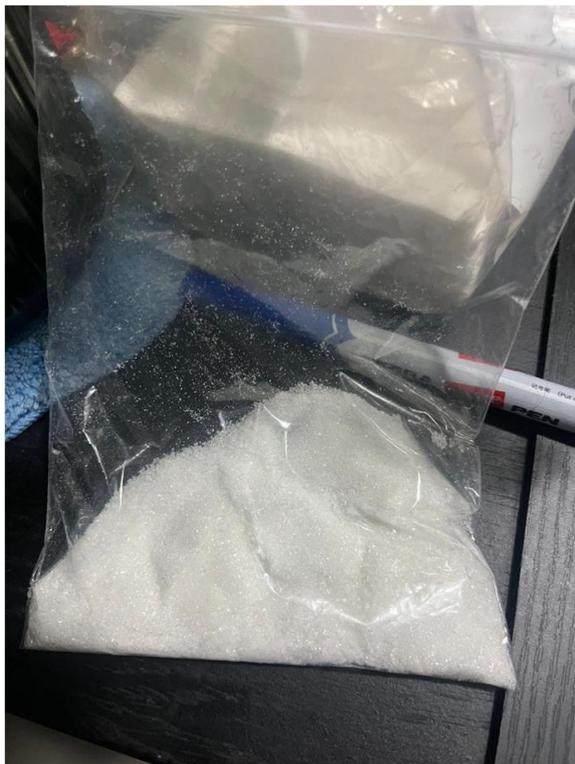
Prescription medicines seized from foreign national at Changi Airport Terminal 3 on 19 November 2025



Prescription medicines seized from foreign national at Changi Airport Terminal 3 on 19 November 2025

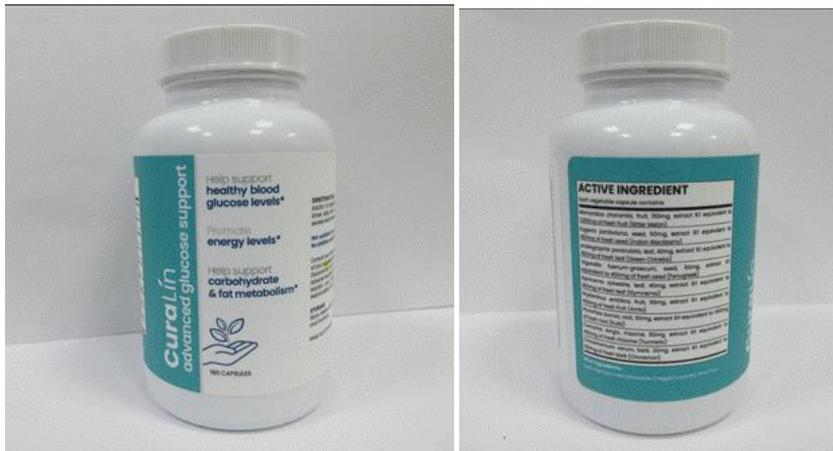


Etomidate powder seized from Mohammed Akil Abdul Rahim





## CuraLin advanced glucose support



*All photos are to be credited to the Health Sciences Authority, Singapore.*