



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
PRESS RELEASE
14 JUNE 2017

HSA ALERT: 'NUTRILINE BLUVELLE' SOLD ONLINE FOUND TO CONTAIN BANNED SUBSTANCE AND CAUSED ADVERSE REACTIONS IN CONSUMER

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is alerting members of the public not to purchase or consume 'Nutraline Bluvelle', a weight loss product sold online. The product was tested by HSA and found to contain a banned substance, sibutramine. Please refer to **Annex A** for pictures of the product.

2 'Nutraline Bluvelle' was marketed as a health supplement for slimming, with claims that it contains natural plant ingredients which are 'safe and free of side effects'. A female in her 20s experienced rapid heartbeats, anxiety, a drastic decrease in appetite, dizziness and lethargy after consuming 'Nutraline Bluvelle'. Such symptoms are common adverse reactions associated with the use of the banned substance, sibutramine. The consumer had purchased the product from an online shop based in Malaysia, but HSA has detected that the product was also sold on several other local and overseas online platforms. HSA is currently investigating the local sale of this product.

Dangers of sibutramine, a banned substance

3 Sibutramine was previously available as a prescription-only weight loss drug but has been withdrawn from Singapore since 2010, due to an increased risk of heart attacks and strokes. Other serious adverse effects associated with the use of sibutramine include high blood pressure, irregular heartbeats, hallucinations and mood swings.

4 In the past, HSA had received adverse effect reports about consumers experiencing hallucinations or hearing voices, palpitations and breathlessness after consuming slimming products¹ bought online. These products were tested to contain the banned substance sibutramine, even though they were marketed to contain natural ingredients. The level of sibutramine found in some of these products might result in a consumer unwittingly taking as high as up to eight times the maximum daily dosage of the prescribed amount of sibutramine², when it was previously available as a prescription-only drug. This would pose a very serious health hazard to consumers.

Consumer advisory

5 Members of the public are advised to:

¹http://www.hsa.gov.sg/content/hsa/en/News_Events/Press_Releases/2014/TwoIllegalWeightLossProducts.html

²http://www.hsa.gov.sg/content/hsa/en/News_Events/Press_Releases/2017/anyangherbalproducts.html

- Stop taking ‘Nutraline Bluvelle’ immediately, and consult a doctor if you feel unwell or are concerned about your health.
- Be wary of health products that promise or deliver quick and miraculous weight loss. Such products may contain prescription medicines which should only be taken under medical supervision, or undeclared potent or banned ingredients that may seriously harm your health. Do not gamble with your health.
- Do not trust online product reviews, as these testimonials usually cannot be verified.
- Exercise caution when purchasing health products online. Anyone can be a seller on these e-commerce platforms. You cannot be certain where and how these products were made. They could potentially be counterfeits or adulterated with undeclared potent or banned ingredients which can seriously harm your health.

Additionally, members of the public are encouraged to visit www.healthdangers.sg to learn more about the dangers of buying health products from dubious sources.

Sale and supply of illegal products

6 Sellers must stop selling ‘Nutraline Bluvelle’ immediately. They are warned that it is illegal to sell and supply complementary health products (e.g., health supplements, traditional medicines) containing undeclared potent western medicines or banned substances.

7 Anyone who supplies illegal health products is liable to prosecution and if convicted, may be imprisoned for up to 3 years and/or fined up to \$100,000.

8 Members of the public who have any information on the illegal local sale and supply of ‘Nutraline Bluvelle’ 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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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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