



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
PRESS RELEASE**

21 May 2009

HSA WARNS AGAINST TAKING “AIR IKAN HARUAN” FOUND TO CONTAIN UNDECLARED POTENT SUBSTANCE

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) has detected dexamethasone, an undeclared potent medicinal substance, in a traditional medicine labelled “**Air Ikan Haruan**”.

2 One local serious adverse drug reaction associated with the consumption of this product was recently reported to HSA’s Pharmacovigilance Branch. Further analytical testing by HSA’s Pharmaceutical Laboratory confirmed that “Air Ikan Haruan” contained dexamethasone, a potent western medicine.

3 “Air Ikan Haruan” has not been found in the local retail outlets. However, HSA is concerned that members of the public may have purchased the product from overseas and been inadvertently exposed to serious health hazards caused by this adulterated product. Members of the public should not consume any stocks of this product that they may have in their possession.

About the Product

4 “Air Ikan Haruan” is packaged in small bottles, and its label makes a slew of claims, such as “cleanse dirty blood, ease itchy skin, cure internal injury, boost energy, ease dry cough, promote maternal health after childbirth”. (See Annex A for the photograph of this particular product and its packaging.)

About the Adverse Drug Reaction

5 The elderly patient had been taking the adulterated “Air Ikan Haruan”, which she purchased overseas, for pain relief for more than a year. She was reported to have developed symptoms of weakness, fatigue, widespread body aches, loss of appetite and weight loss after stopping the product. These are symptoms of abrupt dexamethasone withdrawal.

6 Dexamethasone is a prescription drug commonly used to treat inflammatory conditions such as arthritis. The unsupervised and prolonged usage of dexamethasone is associated with serious adverse reactions such as irregular heartbeat, increased blood pressure, increased cholesterol, increased blood sugar,

menstrual irregularities, muscle and bone damage, seizures and mental and mood disorders.

Public Advisory

7 HSA strongly advises anyone who has purchased this product not to consume it. In the event they have consumed this product, they should seek medical advice if they feel unwell or are concerned about their health.

8 In the interest of public health and safety, HSA would like to highlight this risk to reinforce the message that consumers should not purchase medicines and health products from dubious sources, locally or overseas, as there is no guarantee of the safety of these products. Consumers who develop any unexpected reactions to a traditional or herbal medicine are also advised to inform their doctors.

9 Anyone who comes across “Air Ikan Haruan” sold illegally is encouraged to report to HSA’s Enforcement Branch at **Tel: 6866 3485** (24-hour line) or **Email: hsa_is@hsa.gov.sg** HSA welcomes feedback and information on illegal activities involving health products, which HSA has been receiving from the public and media partners. The information from these additional 'eyes-and-ears' on the ground is a valuable contribution to the continuing fight against such illegal activities.

HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY 21 MAY 2009

▪ 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, 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. It operates the national blood bank, Bloodbank@HSA, securing the nation’s 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/>.

▪ 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.

HSA WARNS AGAINST TAKING “AIR IKAN HARUAN” FOUND TO CONTAIN UNDECLARED POTENT SUBSTANCE

1. Photograph of “AIR IKAN HARUAN ”



2. Product Labelling

Labelling in English:

Product name	Air Ikan Haruan
Manufacturer / Distributor	Perniagaan Jasa, Syarikat Sg. Mulia, 17 Kg. Setiawan, Setiawan, Perak , Malaysia
Ingredients	Snake Head fish, Basic spices, Eurykoma Longifolia, Tongkat Ali, Aloe Vera, Honey sweetener, Ginger.
Indications as on label	Cleanse dirty blood, ease itchy skin, cure internal injury, boost energy, ease dry cough, promote maternal health after childbirth.
Instruction for dosage	1 full cup, if well; 2 full cups, if feeling weak. Cup is provided.

Labelling in Malay:

Product name	Air Ikan Haruan
Manufacturer/ Distributor	Perniagaan Jasa, Syarikat Sg. Mulia, 17 Kg. Setiawan, Setiawan, Perak, Malaysia
Ingredients	Ikan Haruan, Rempah Ratus, Pasak Bumi, Tongkat Ali, Lidah Buaya, Manisan Madu, Halia
Indications as on label	Membersihkan darah yang , Melegakan gatal-gatal kulit, Menyembuhkan luka dalam, Meningkatkan tenaga, Melegakan batuk kering. Baik untuk ibu-ibu yang baru
Instruction for dosage	Badan sehat sekali satu cawan, Badan lemah dua cawan (yang disediakan) (diminum selepas makan)