



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
PRESS RELEASE
24 NOVEMBER 2015**

HSA ALERTS PUBLIC TO ‘MEIYONG’ COSMETIC PRODUCTS FOUND TO CONTAIN POTENT PROHIBITED INGREDIENTS AND UNDECLARED WESTERN INGREDIENTS, INCLUDING HIGH LEVELS OF MERCURY

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is alerting members of the public not to purchase or use the ‘Meiyong Super Whitening Extra Whitening & Face Lift Advanced Super Revitalizer (Cream) Whitening Formula And Face Lift’ as they were tested to contain high levels of mercury and undeclared potent western medicinal ingredients which included:

- Hydroquinone
- Tretinoin
- Triamcinolone acetonide
- Betamethasone 17-valerate

Please see **Annex A** for pictures of the products.

2 Preliminary investigative findings showed that consumers in Singapore may have bought the product from local retail outlets or from online platforms. The prolonged use of this illegal product, which claims to contain natural ingredients such as seaweed, may lead to serious adverse reactions. Investigations are still ongoing.

Undeclared potent ingredients found in the illegal products

3 Mercury is a toxic substance, and is prohibited for use as an ingredient in cosmetic products. Mercury may cause rashes, skin irritation and blotchiness, and can be absorbed through the skin to cause numbness, dizziness and headaches. Chronic exposure to high levels of mercury may also affect the kidneys.

4 Hydroquinone and tretinoin are potent ingredients used in western prescription medicines for the treatment of skin conditions. Patients using such products need to avoid sun exposure as these ingredients may cause increased sensitivity of the skin to sunlight and cause users to get sunburned more easily. When used inappropriately without medical

supervision, hydroquinone can cause changes in skin pigmentation or hypersensitivity reactions, while tretinoin can cause irritation and peeling of the skin.

5 Triamcinolone acetonide and betamethasone 17-valerate are potent steroids which are generally prescribed for inflammatory conditions and should only be used under strict medical supervision. Adverse effects include hypersensitivity reactions and thinning of the skin. They may also be absorbed into the body to cause adverse effects such as Cushing's syndrome (characterised by a round face or 'moon face' and upper body obesity with thin limbs), obesity and high blood pressure, when applied to large areas or used over a prolonged period.

Consumer advisory

6 Members of the public who have purchased or are using these products are advised to:

- Stop using the products immediately and discard them. If you experience any adverse effects or are concerned about your health after using the affected product, please see a doctor as soon as possible.
- Consumers should be very cautious when purchasing and using cosmetics products that promise miraculous effects or make exaggerated claims like "super whitening". You cannot be certain where and how these products were made. They may also contain undeclared ingredients that are harmful to your health.
- Consumers are advised to purchase cosmetics products with proper labelling and ingredients listing in English, so that they can follow instructions on the correct use of the product and ensure that they are not allergic to any of the ingredients used in the product.
- Visit www.healthdangers.sg to learn more about the dangers of buying illegal health products from dubious sources.

7 Members of the public who have any information on the sale and supply of these two illegal products 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.

Dealer advisory

8 It is an offence to sell or supply illegal health products in Singapore. Do not unwittingly harm someone's health by selling illegal health products. Anyone convicted of

selling these products will face a penalty fine of up to \$100,000 and/or imprisonment for a period of up to three years under the Health Products Act.

9 Dealers supplying cosmetics products in Singapore are also reminded of their direct responsibility for the safety of their products and should ensure that the cosmetics they supply comply with Singapore's regulatory requirements. They are required to notify HSA prior to placing them on the market so as to facilitate appropriate follow-up actions if safety concerns arise.

10 Distributors and retailers of cosmetics products should also adhere to the labelling requirements of cosmetic products stipulated under the Health Products (Cosmetic Products – ASEAN Cosmetic Directive) Regulations 2007 and ensure proper labelling for all cosmetic products. Labels or labelling statements must include the full list of ingredients in English on the container or package and be clearly legible.

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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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Pictures of 'Meiyong Super Whitening Extra Whitening & Face Lift Advanced Super Revitalizer (Cream) Whitening Formula And Face Lift' and its contents*



*Each box contained 3 tubs of different coloured creams and gel (green, white and yellow).