



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY  
PRESS RELEASE  
25 JANUARY 2016

## HSA ALERTS PUBLIC TO THREE HEALTH PRODUCTS FOUND TO CONTAIN UNDECLARED WESTERN MEDICINAL INGREDIENTS

1 The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is alerting members of the public not to purchase or consume three health products that were tested to contain undeclared western medicinal ingredients which can cause serious adverse reactions. All three products were either purchased overseas through friends or from online platforms. These products did not have a list of ingredients on their labels, which complementary health products (including Chinese proprietary medicines, traditional medicines and health supplements) are required to carry. The products are:

No.	Name of product	Undeclared potent ingredients found	Source of purchase
1	‘活血清肝解毒丸’ ‘Huo Xue Qing Gan Jie Du Wan’	Dexamethasone and Chlorpheniramine	Overseas purchase through friend
2	‘黄牛木是你的救星’ ‘Huang Niu Mu Shi Ni De Jiu Xing’	Dexamethasone	Overseas purchase through friend
3	‘Meizitang Botanical Slimming 100% Natural Soft Gel’	Diclofenac	Online purchase

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

2 ‘Huo Xue Qing Gan Jie Du Wan’ and ‘Huang Niu Mu Shi Ni De Jiu Xing’ were purchased overseas and claimed to be able to treat various forms of chronic ailments, such as arthritis, liver disorders, high blood pressure, diabetes and stroke. However, one patient in his 40s was hospitalised for Cushing’s syndrome (which is characterised by round face or ‘moon face’ and upper body obesity with thin limbs), joint pain, weight gain and insomnia after consuming ‘Huo Xue Qing Gan Jie Du Wan’. The presence of dexamethasone (a potent steroid) in the product could have contributed to his medical condition. Another patient experienced rapid relief of his joint pain after consuming ‘Huang Niu Mu Shi Ni De Jiu Xing’, which was also tested to contain dexamethasone.

3 ‘Meizitang Botanical Slimming 100% Natural Soft Gel’, which was sold through online platforms, claimed to be ‘free of side effects’ but was tested to contain diclofenac, a potent painkiller.

## **Undeclared drug ingredients found in the products**

4 Dexamethasone is a potent steroid usually prescribed for inflammatory conditions, which should only be used under strict medical supervision. Long-term unsupervised use of oral steroids can cause Cushing's syndrome, increased blood glucose levels leading to diabetes, high blood pressure, cataracts, muscular and bone disorders, and an increased risk of infections. Patients with chronic medical conditions such as high blood pressure and diabetes may experience worsening of their existing conditions.

5 Chlorpheniramine is an antihistamine used to relieve allergic reactions such as rhinitis, and can only be used under medical supervision by a pharmacist or doctor. Adverse effects from the use of chlorpheniramine include drowsiness, blurred vision, vomiting, constipation and poor coordination.

6 Diclofenac is a potent painkiller and may potentially cause serious gastric bleeding, as well as cardiovascular events such as heart attacks and stroke when used for a prolonged period. It should be used under close medical supervision, especially in patients with underlying heart conditions.

## **Consumer advisory**

7 Members of the public who have purchased or are consuming 'Huo Xue Qing Gan Jie Du Wan', 'Huang Niu Mu Shi Ni De Jiu Xing', or 'Meizitang Botanical Slimming 100% Natural Soft Gel' are advised to:

- Consult a doctor as soon as possible. Do not stop taking 'Huo Xue Qing Gan Jie Du Wan' or 'Huang Niu Mu Shi Ni De Jiu Xing' immediately as sudden discontinuation of steroids without proper medical supervision can cause serious withdrawal symptoms such as weakness, fatigue, confusion and low blood pressure, especially when they have been consumed for more than a few weeks.
- Stop taking 'Meizitang Botanical Slimming 100% Natural Soft Gel' immediately. Consult a doctor if you experience any discomfort after using the product or are concerned about your health.
- Be careful when purchasing any health product, especially through the internet or even from well-meaning friends or relatives. You cannot be certain where and how these products were made. They may be illegal, counterfeit or substandard, and may contain undeclared ingredients which can harm your health.

8 Additionally, members of the public are encouraged to visit [www.healthdangers.sg](http://www.healthdangers.sg) to learn more about the dangers of buying illegal health products from dubious sources.

9 Sellers who are selling any of these three adulterated health products should stop the sales and distribution of them immediately. Offenders may face a penalty

fine of up to \$10,000 and/or imprisonment for a period of up to two years under the Poisons Act if convicted. HSA would like to remind sellers to be cautious when sourcing for health products to sell. It is the seller's responsibility to ensure that the products they sell are safe and adhere to local legislations before they are made available in the market.

10 Members of the public who have any information on the sale and supply of these 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](mailto: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/>.

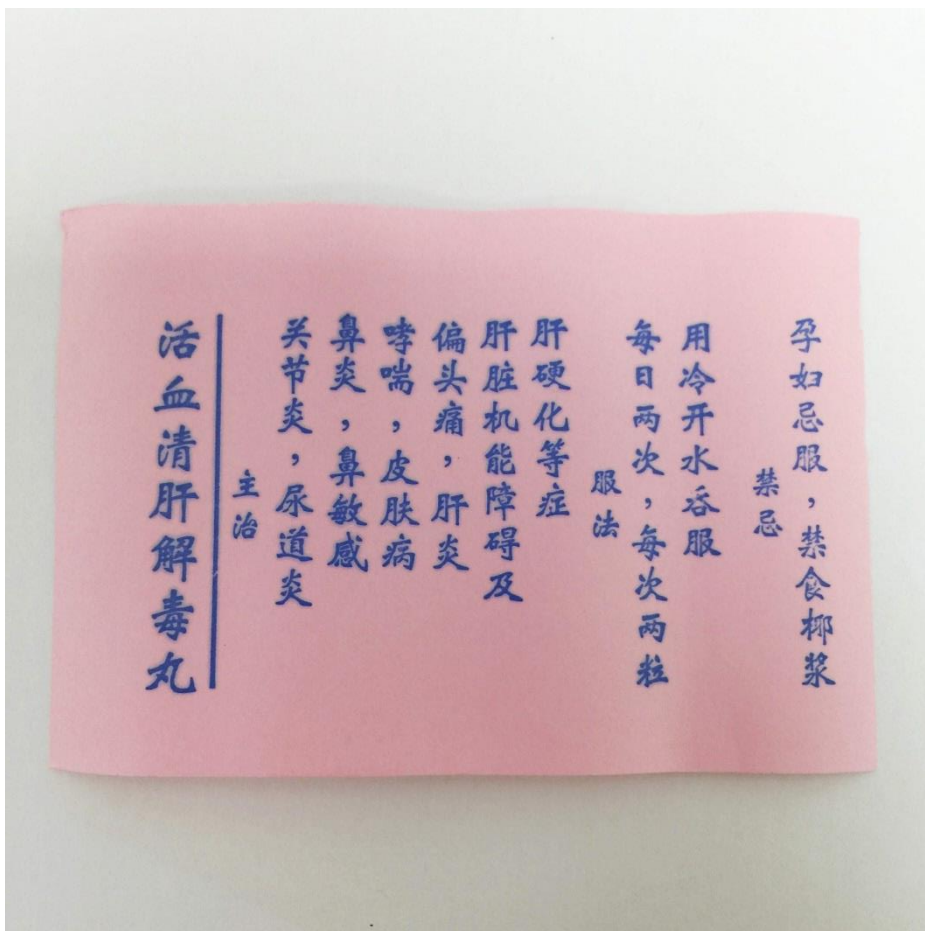
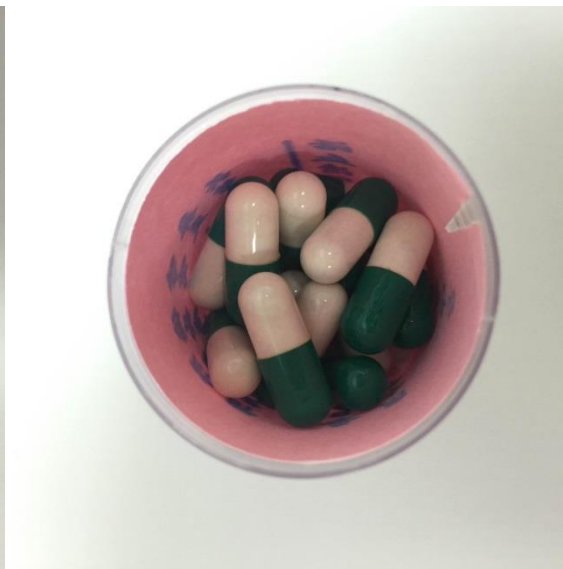
For more updates on public health and safety matters, follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/HSAsg](http://www.twitter.com/HSAsg).

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

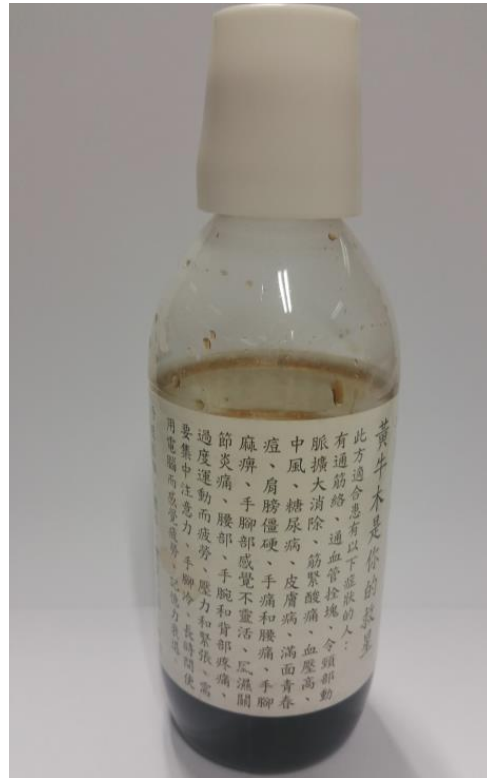
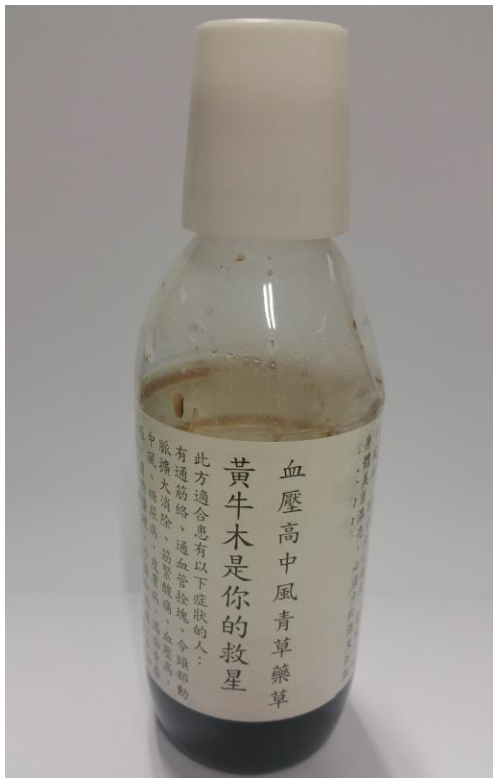
The Health Products Regulation Group (HPRG) of HSA ensures that drugs, innovative therapeutics, medical devices and health-related products are wisely regulated and meet appropriate safety, quality and efficacy standards. It contributes to the development of biomedical sciences in Singapore by administering a robust, scientific and responsive regulatory framework.

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'Huo Xue Qing Gan Jie Du Wan'



'Huang Niu Mu Shi Ni De Jiu Xing'



'Meizitang Botanical Slimming 100% Natural Soft Gel'

