



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
PRESS RELEASE
6 AUG 2013

HSA ALERTS PUBLIC TO SERIOUS ADVERSE REACTIONS CAUSED BY ILLEGAL HEALTH PRODUCTS

Man suffers from a heart attack and stroke after consuming one of these products

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is alerting members of the public to three illegal products found containing potent western medicinal ingredients. Three consumers have fallen victim to these harmful products and one of them who suffered a life-threatening reaction has not recovered. The three products are:

Product	Undeclared medicinal ingredient
“力龙美国魔棒” Li Long Mei Guo Mo Bang	sildenafil
“非洲黑蚁王” Africa Black Ant	sildenafil
“人参杜仲萬灵香” Ginseng Tu Chong Wan Lin Heong	dexamethasone

2 Both “力龙美国魔棒” and “Africa Black Ant” are promoted for sexual enhancement and members of the public are advised to stop using them immediately.

3 For “Ginseng Tu Chong Wan Lin Heong” which is touted for the treatment of arthritis and joint pain, consumers are advised to consult a doctor immediately, particularly so if they have taken the product for more than a few weeks. Sudden discontinuation of the corticosteroid-containing product can cause serious withdrawal symptoms, such as weakness, fatigue, and confusion. Pictures of these products can be found in the [Annex](#).

“力龙美国魔棒” (Li Long Mei Guo Mo Bang) and Africa Black Ant “非洲黑蚁王”

4 A patient in his 40s was found unconscious after suffering a heart attack and stroke. He was admitted to the hospital. A bottle of “力龙美国魔棒” which contained sildenafil was found on him. The patient is still in the hospital receiving treatment. As the patient is unable to talk as a consequence of the stroke, it is not known where he obtained the product.

5 Another patient in his 50s suffered from chest pain and shortness of breath related to the consumption of “Africa Black Ant” purchased from street peddlers and was hospitalised. Sildenafil was similarly detected in “Africa Black Ant”. The patient is still under treatment for his condition and has not fully recovered.

6 Sildenafil is used to treat erectile dysfunction and should only be used when prescribed by a doctor. Its usage without proper medical advice and close supervision can cause serious

adverse reactions such as decreased or loss of vision and hearing, low blood pressure and other cardiovascular events such as stroke and myocardial infarction.

Ginseng Tu Chong Wan Lin Heong “人参杜仲萬灵香”

7 A female patient in her 30s had been consuming Ginseng Tu Chong Wan Lin Heong, bought from overseas, to relieve joint pain for about 9 months. She suffered Cushing’s syndrome which is caused by intake of excessive steroids. The symptoms are swelling of the face, puffy eyes and weight gain. Lab findings revealed the presence of dexamethasone, a potent corticosteroid, a prescription-only medicine.

8 Dexamethasone is taken for anti-inflammatory purposes and should only be used under strict medical supervision. Long term unsupervised use of oral corticosteroids can cause serious adverse effects such as increased blood glucose leading to diabetes, high blood pressure, muscular and bone disorders and an increased risk of infections.

Warning and advice to sellers

9 HSA takes a serious view against those engaged in the sale and supply of illegal health products and will take a strong enforcement action against such persons. HSA strongly warns sellers to stop the sales and distribution of these illegal products. Complementary health products are not allowed to contain western medicinal ingredients or substances controlled under the Poisons Act or Health Products Act. Anyone found convicted of selling these illegal products will face a penalty fine of up to \$10,000 and/or imprisonment for a period of up to two years under the Poisons Act, and a penalty fine of up to \$100,000 and/or imprisonment for a period of up to three years under the Health Products Act.

Public advisory

10 HSA advises members of the public to stop the use of “力龙美国魔棒” and “Africa Black Ant” and consult a doctor should they feel unwell. For those consuming the steroid-containing “Ginseng Tu Chong Wan Lin Heong”, they should consult a doctor as soon as possible before stopping the product. Sudden discontinuation of steroids without proper medical supervision can cause serious withdrawal symptoms such as weakness, fatigue, confusion and low blood pressure, especially when these products are taken for more than a few weeks.

11 Consumers with medical conditions are also advised not to self-medicate and seek proper medical treatment for their conditions. Consumers should be wary of sexual enhancement products with miraculous claims and are advised not to purchase such products from dubious sources as they are potentially dangerous. Such products are manufactured illegally with no quality control and may contain unauthorised hidden western medicinal ingredients or toxic ingredients, which can cause serious harm to a person’s health. This is evident from the adverse reaction reports associated with such products received by HSA over the years which include reports of coma and stroke, some of which are associated with fatal outcomes.

12 Members of the public who have any information on the sale of these three 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. Additionally, members of public are

encouraged to visit www.healthdangers.sg to learn more about the dangers of buying illegal health products from dubious sources.

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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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Picture of the 3 illegal health products



From left to right: “力龙美国魔棒” (Li Long Mei Guo Mo Bang), Africa Black Ant “非洲黑蚁王” and Ginseng Tu Chong Wan Lin Heong “人参杜仲萬灵香”

“力龙美国魔棒” (Li Long Mei Guo Mo Bang)



Africa Black Ant “非洲黑蚁王”



Ginseng Tu Chong Wan Lin Heong “人参杜仲萬灵香”

