



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
PRESS RELEASE
13 MARCH 2018

HSA ALERT: THREE HEALTH PRODUCTS SOLD ONLINE FOUND TO CONTAIN POTENT UNDECLARED INGREDIENTS; TWO OF THEM HAD VERY HIGH LEVELS OF MERCURY

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is alerting members of the public not to purchase or use the following health products:

- (a) 'Herba Saraf'
- (b) 'Wonderglow Whitening Specialist Super Ultra Glowing Cream' cosmetic set ('Wonderglow'), which contains a 'Day Cream', a 'Night Cream' and a 'Soap Bar'.
- (c) 'Tati Skin Care 5 in 1' cosmetic set^{1,2}

The products were obtained from Malaysia and sold on various online platforms.

2 HSA tested these products and found potent undeclared ingredients that are harmful and prohibited in these products:

Name of product	Potent ingredients found
'Herba Saraf'	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dexamethasone
'Wonderglow Whitening Specialist Super Ultra Glowing Cream' cosmetic set	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mercury, exceeding permissible limits by 7,000 times
'Tati Skin Care 5 in 1' set	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mercury, exceeding permissible limits by 50,000 times• Hydroquinone and Tretinoin

Please refer to **Annex A** for pictures of the products and **Annex B** for more information about the potent undeclared ingredients found in the products.

ADVERSE REACTION REPORTED TO HSA

3 A consumer in her 40s had obtained 'Herba Saraf' from a relative in Malaysia who had bought it online. 'Herba Saraf' was labelled to contain herbal ingredients for the relief of pain such as joint pain and migraine. After taking it for more than a month for her knee pain, she was diagnosed with impaired glucose tolerance (poor blood sugar control). Such a condition may increase one's risk of diabetes and heart disease.

¹ http://www.hsa.gov.sg/content/hsa/en/News_Events/Press_Releases/2017/tatiskincare5in1.html

² http://www.hsa.gov.sg/content/hsa/en/News_Events/Press_Releases/2017/operationpangea2017.html

She stopped taking the product immediately, suspecting that her condition was caused by it. The product was subsequently tested by HSA to contain dexamethasone, a potent steroid that is a prescription-only medicine that should only be used under medical supervision. Inappropriate and prolonged use of steroids can result in Cushing's syndrome, increased blood glucose levels leading to diabetes, high blood pressure, cataracts, muscular and bone disorders, and an increased risk of infections.

IMPORTATION & SALE OF ILLEGAL COSMETICS

4 A woman in her 20s was detained at the Causeway for bringing the 'Wonderglow' and 'Tati Skin Care 5 in 1' cosmetic sets from Malaysia into Singapore. She had intended to sell these products online. HSA seized the products and tested them. HSA also found that 'Wonderglow' was being sold online by other sellers. It was marketed as an anti-wrinkle and anti-aging product, with claims to brighten the skin in "as early as 3 days". It was falsely labelled as "100% No Mercury Guaranteed", as HSA found that the 'Night Cream' contained very high levels of mercury, exceeding the permissible limits by 7,000 times.

5 HSA had alerted the public to stop buying and using the 'Tati Skin Care 5 in 1' cosmetic set in June and September 2017^{1,2}. The product has resurfaced online, and recent tests showed that 'Therapy Cream 1' in the set contained mercury exceeding the permissible limits by close to 50,000 times. 'Therapy Cream 2' in the set was tested to contain hydroquinone and tretinoin. Both are potent western ingredients that should only be used under medical supervision.

6 Long-term exposure to cosmetic products with high levels of mercury can cause serious health consequences, including damage to the kidneys, and digestive and nervous systems. Inappropriate use of hydroquinone and tretinoin could cause adverse skin reactions such as redness, burning and peeling of the skin.

ADVISORY TO CONSUMERS

7 Consumers are advised to take note of the following:

- See a doctor as soon as possible if you have taken 'Herba Saraf'. This product contains a potent steroid. Sudden discontinuation of steroids without proper medical supervision can cause serious withdrawal symptoms such as fatigue, confusion and low blood pressure.
- Stop using 'Wonderglow Whitening Specialist Super Ultra Glowing Cream' ('Wonderglow'), and 'Tati Skin Care 5 in 1' cosmetic sets immediately as they contain very high levels of mercury and other undeclared potent ingredients that can lead to serious adverse reactions. See a doctor if you are experiencing adverse effects.
- Be cautious when purchasing health products online or from unfamiliar sources, even if they are recommended by friends or relatives. You cannot be certain what these products contain, and where and how they were made.
- Be wary of health products that promise quick and miraculous results or carry exaggerated claims like "100% Safe and Effective". Such products may contain prescription medicines which should only be taken under medical supervision, or potent and prohibited ingredients that can harm you.

ADVISORY TO SELLERS AND SUPPLIERS

- 8 Sellers and suppliers are warned that:
- The supply of 'Herba Saraf', 'Night Cream' in 'Wonderglow', 'Therapy Cream 1' and 'Therapy Cream 2' in 'Tati Skin Care 5 in 1' must be stopped immediately. These are illegal health products which contain undeclared potent ingredients.
 - 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.
 - HSA will not hesitate to take enforcement actions against sellers and suppliers who peddle illegal health products.

9 Members of the public who have any information on the sale and supply of these 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.

**HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
SINGAPORE
13 MARCH 2018**

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/>.

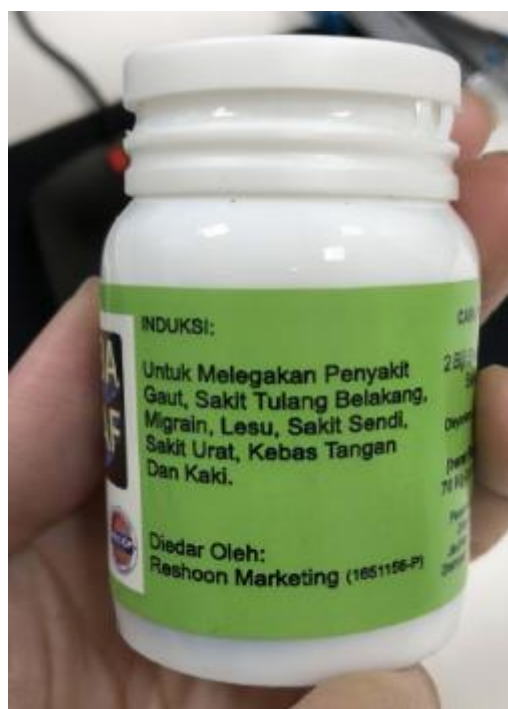
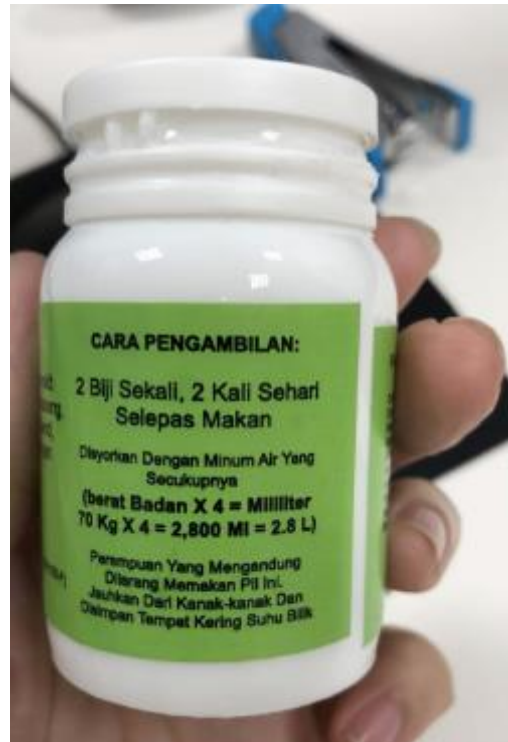
For more updates on public health and safety matters, follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/HSAsg.

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.

HSA ALERT: THREE HEALTH PRODUCTS SOLD ONLINE FOUND TO CONTAIN POTENT UNDECLARED INGREDIENTS; TWO OF THEM HAD VERY HIGH LEVELS OF MERCURY

'Herba Saraf'



'Wonderglow' cosmetic set



'Tati Skincare 5 in 1' cosmetic set



INFORMATION ON POTENT INGREDIENTS FOUND IN THE PRODUCTS

Dexamethasone

Dexamethasone is a potent steroid that is usually prescribed for inflammatory conditions and should only be used under strict medical supervision. Long term unsupervised use of oral steroids can cause Cushing's syndrome (which is characterised by a round or 'moon face' and upper body obesity with thin limbs), increased blood glucose levels leading to diabetes, high blood pressure, cataracts, bone disorders, an increased risk of infections and muscle weakness.

Mercury

Mercury is a toxic substance and is prohibited for use as an ingredient in cosmetic products. Regular application of creams containing mercury could lead to rash, skin discolouration and blotching. Chronic exposure to very high levels of mercury in cosmetic products may also cause toxic effects to the kidneys, digestive and nervous system, as it can be absorbed through the skin. This could lead to organ damage.

Hydroquinone and Tretinoin

Hydroquinone and tretinoin are potent ingredients that are used in western prescription medicines for the treatment of skin conditions. These ingredients are prohibited in skincare cosmetic products and should only be used under medical supervision, as they may cause harmful effects if not used properly. The inappropriate use of hydroquinone could result in changes in skin colour and hypersensitivity reactions such as rashes, redness, tingling and burning of skin. Inappropriate use of tretinoin could lead to redness and peeling of the skin.