



HSA updates on products found overseas that contain potent ingredients (January 2023)

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) would like to update the public on products that have been found and reported by overseas regulators in January 2023 to contain potent ingredients which are not allowed in these products and may cause side effects. This information is provided to increase awareness on safety issues of such products found overseas, which may impact the local population. Please refer to Annex A and Annex B for the list of products and the possible side effects of the potent ingredients.

HSA's Advisory

2 Members of the public are advised to:

- Consult a doctor if you have consumed any of the products and are feeling unwell.
- Avoid buying any of the products when abroad.
- Exercise caution when purchasing health products online or from sources (either local or overseas) which you may not be familiar with, even if well-meaning friends or relatives have recommended them. You cannot be certain where and how these products were made. They may be illegal, counterfeit or substandard, and may contain potent ingredients which can harm your health. If buying health products online, we encourage you to buy them from websites with an established retail presence in Singapore.
- Be wary of products that promise quick and miraculous results or carry exaggerated claims like “100% safe”, “no side effects” or “scientifically proven”. Consumers should also be cautious of products that produce unexpected quick recovery of medical conditions.
- Consult your doctor or pharmacist if you need help for the management of your acute and chronic medical symptoms and conditions (e.g. diabetes, hypertension, eczema).

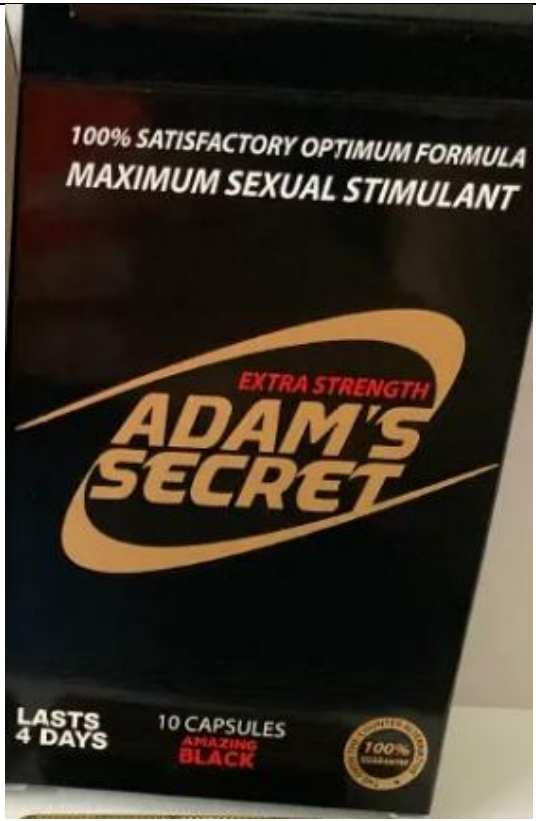
3 Additionally, members of the public are encouraged to visit <https://www.hsa.gov.sg/consumer-safety/> to learn more about the dangers of buying health products from dubious sources.

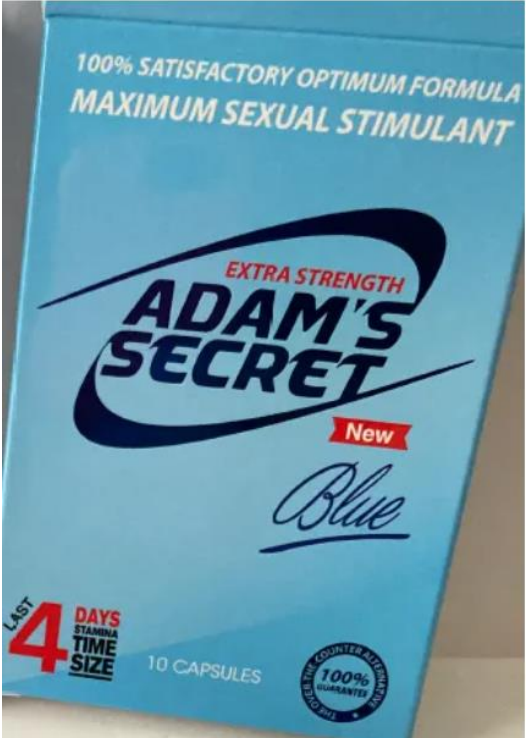
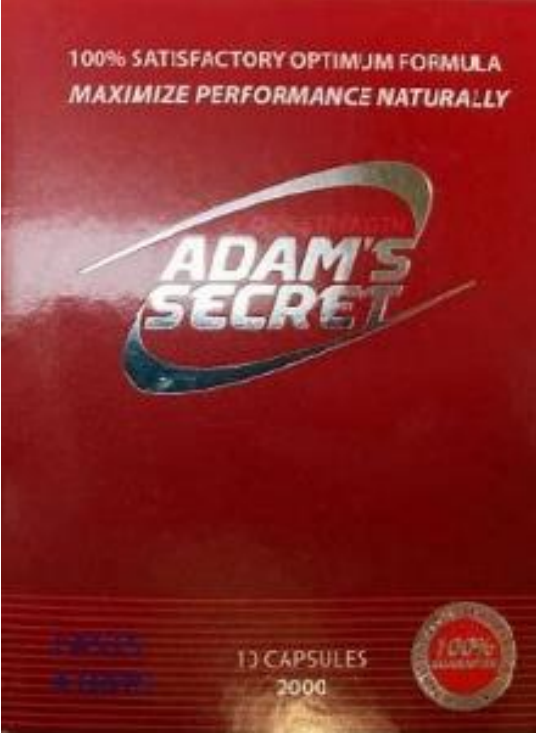
4 Members of the public who come across the sale and supply of these products in Singapore may contact HSA's Enforcement Branch at Tel: 6866 3485 during office hours (Monday to Friday) or email: hsa_is@hsa.gov.sg.

Annex A

List of Products

Note: There may be different versions or variants of the products listed below. You are advised to consult your doctor or pharmacist if you are unsure of any health product you intend to use, or if you need help for your acute and chronic medical symptoms and conditions

Name of product	Picture of product	Potent ingredient(s)	Source (Regulatory Agency)
Adam's Secret Extra Strength Amazing Black		Tadalafil (PDE-5 inhibitor)	United States Food and Drug Administration
Adam's Secret Extra Strength Purple	Nil	Sildenafil and Tadalafil (PDE-5 inhibitors)	United States Food and Drug Administration




Name of product	Picture of product	Potent ingredient(s)	Source (Regulatory Agency)
Adam's Secret Extra Strength Blue		Tadalafil (PDE-5 inhibitor)	United States Food and Drug Administration
Adam's Secret Extra Strength 2000		Sildenafil and Tadalafil (PDE-5 inhibitors)	United States Food and Drug Administration

Name of product	Picture of product	Potent ingredient(s)	Source (Regulatory Agency)
Adam's Secret Extra Strength 3000 Platinum		Tadalafil (PDE-5 inhibitor)	United States Food and Drug Administration
Beneks' Fashion Fair Cream		Clobetasol (Corticosteroid)	Health Canada
Beneks' Hot Movate Gel		Betamethasone (Corticosteroid)	Health Canada
Clearbact Cream		Betamethasone (Corticosteroid) and Neomycin	Health Canada

Name of product	Picture of product	Potent ingredient(s)	Source (Regulatory Agency)
Dr. Reade Slim Sense		Lorcaserin	United States Food and Drug Administration
H2O Jours Naturel Papaya Cream		Clobetasol (Corticosteroid)	Health Canada
H2O Jours Naturel Pastèque Cream		Clobetasol (Corticosteroid)	Health Canada

Name of product	Picture of product	Potent ingredient(s)	Source (Regulatory Agency)
Janet Papaya Cream	 <p>The image shows the packaging for Janet Papaya Cream. It is an orange box with the brand name 'JANET' in large, stylized letters. Below it, 'Papaya Cream' is written in a smaller font. The active ingredient 'Clobetasol Propionate 0,05%' is listed. There is a 'New Formula' banner in the top left corner and a 'Fast Action' label at the bottom. The packaging features a woman's face and a papaya.</p>	Clobetasol (Corticosteroid)	Health Canada
Kojic Clear Fast Action Cream	 <p>The image shows the packaging for Kojic Clear Fast Action Cream. It is a white box with a red 'New' banner at the top left. The product name 'Kojic Clear' is prominently displayed in orange and red, with 'Fast Action Cream' below it. The packaging features a woman's face and the text 'Results in 7 Days' with a leaf icon. The weight '50gm' is indicated at the bottom right.</p>	Clobetasol (Corticosteroid)	Health Canada

Name of product	Picture of product	Potent ingredient(s)	Source (Regulatory Agency)
L'abidjanaise Cream		Clobetasol (Corticosteroid)	Health Canada
La Bamakoise		Clobetasol (Corticosteroid)	Health Canada
P.Y. Facial Skin Cream		Betamethasone (Corticosteroid) and Mercury	Thailand Food and Drug Administration
SANGTER Energy Supplement	Nil	Sildenafil (PDE-5 inhibitor)	United States Food and Drug Administration

Name of product	Picture of product	Potent ingredient(s)	Source (Regulatory Agency)
Tretinoin Cream Anti-Acne Anti-Wrinkle Youth Renewal Night Cream		Tretinoin	Health Canada
Visible Difference Cream		Clobetasol (Corticosteroid)	Health Canada
VixaSkineal Cream		Clobetasol (Corticosteroid), Ketoconazole and Neomycin	Health Canada

Annex B

The possible side effects of the potent ingredients

Corticosteroids

Betamethasone 17-Valerate, Clobetasol propionate and dexamethasone are potent steroids that are usually prescribed for inflammatory conditions and should only be used under strict medical supervision. Long-term unsupervised use of steroids (including topical use where the steroid can be absorbed into the body) can cause increased blood glucose levels (which may lead to diabetes), high blood pressure, cataracts, muscular and bone disorders, an increased risk of infections and Cushing's syndrome (a round face or 'moon face' appearance and upper body obesity with thin limbs). Discontinuation of steroids without proper medical supervision can cause serious withdrawal symptoms such as fatigue, confusion and low blood pressure, especially when the product has been taken for more than a few weeks.

Ketoconazole

Ketoconazole is a medicine used to treat fungal infections. The possible adverse effects associated with the inappropriate use of creams containing ketoconazole may include skin irritation, itching of the skin, skin rash and impetigo (skin infection).

Lorcaserin

Lorcaserin is a prescription medicine that was discontinued in the United States in 2020 due to an increased risk of cancer detected in the users. Lorcaserin can also cause cardiovascular side effects such as decreased heart rate and heart valve disorder. At high doses, users can develop psychiatric dependences on the drug.

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.

Neomycin

Neomycin is an antibiotic used to treat bacterial infections. It is a prescription medicine and should be used under medical supervision. Neomycin can potentially cause serious side effects including hearing problems or ringing in the ears, loss of balance or coordination, seizures or convulsions, vomiting, watery or bloody diarrhoea, severe stomach cramps and nausea.

Phosphodiesterase Type 5 (PDE-5) inhibitors

This class of medicine includes sildenafil and tadalafil. These medicines can cause serious side effects such as strokes, heart attacks, decreased or loss of vision and hearing and priapism (painful and exceedingly long erections). If priapism is not treated immediately, it may lead to permanent impotence. PDE-5 inhibitors are also not suitable for patients with medical conditions such as certain heart-related problems or who are on heart medications such as nitrates. Deaths of patients found to be using Sildenafil while on nitrates have been reported overseas.

Tretinoin

Tretinoin is a potent ingredient used in prescription medicines for the treatment of skin conditions and should be used under medical supervision. The ingredient is prohibited in skincare cosmetic products. Inappropriate use of tretinoin could lead to side effects such as redness and peeling of skin.