



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY  
PRESS RELEASE  
6 AUGUST 2020

## HSA ALERT: 'COCO CURV' & 'CHOCO FIT' FOUND TO CONTAIN BANNED SUBSTANCE; 'HAMER CANDY' DETECTED WITH POTENT INGREDIENT SIMILAR TO ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION MEDICINE

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is alerting members of the public not to purchase or consume three products which were sold online. HSA's analysis of the products revealed that, contrary to the listing of ingredients on the packaging, these products contained potent ingredients including a banned substance, sibutramine, that may pose serious health risks to consumers. The three products are:

Product name	Potent ingredients
'Coco Curv'	Sibutramine – banned in Singapore
'Choco Fit'	Sibutramine – banned in Singapore
'Hamer Candy'	Nortadalafil – chemically related to tadalafil, an erectile dysfunction medicine

Please refer to **Annex A** for photos of the products and **Annex B** for the possible adverse effects of the potent ingredients found in these products.

2 A female consumer who purchased 'Coco Curv' in Malaysia suspected that the product could be harmful and reported it to HSA. 'Coco Curv' was also marketed online as a slimming product with claims such as "burn fat and calories", "boost energy and metabolism" and "control carbohydrate craving". During investigations into 'Coco Curv', HSA came across 'Choco Fit', another product that was sold online and marketed for slimming. HSA tested both products and detected sibutramine, which has been banned in Singapore since 2010 due to an increased risk of heart attacks and strokes, in both products.

3 A male consumer reported the sale of 'Hamer Candy' as he noted that the product was previously detected to contain a potent ingredient. 'Hamer Candy' was packaged as a candy, but HSA tested it to contain nortadalafil, which is chemically related to tadalafil, a prescription medicine used to treat male erectile dysfunction. Use of nortadalafil may lead to increased risk of serious adverse effects including low blood pressure, strokes and heart attacks.

4 These three products were sold on local e-commerce platforms such as Shopee and Qoo10, or social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. HSA has issued warnings to the sellers and directed the respective website administrators to take down the affected listings.

### **PREVIOUSLY DETECTED PRODUCTS RESURFACED WITH NEW PACKAGING**

5 HSA had previously alerted the public to 'Hamer Candy'<sup>1</sup> in 2018 and 'Choco Fit'<sup>2</sup> in 2019 and taken down the postings of these products. They have recently resurfaced online with new packaging, a common tactic undertaken by unscrupulous manufacturers in an attempt to evade detection and entice consumers.

### **ADVISORY TO CONSUMERS**

6 Consumers are advised on the following:

- Stop taking these three products immediately and see a doctor if you feel unwell or are concerned about your health
- Do not purchase these products and be wary of products that make exaggerated claims or deliver unexpectedly quick effects. They could contain potent ingredients that can seriously harm your health.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.hsa.gov.sg/announcements/news/hsa-updates-on-adulterated-products-found-overseas-\(sep-oct-2018\)](https://www.hsa.gov.sg/announcements/news/hsa-updates-on-adulterated-products-found-overseas-(sep-oct-2018))

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hsa.gov.sg/announcements/press-release/hsa-alert-four-products-detected-with-potent-undeclared-ingredients-one-consumer-had-a-life-threatening-event-and-severe-heart-failure>

## **ADVISORY TO SELLERS AND SUPPLIERS**

7 All sellers and suppliers must stop selling these products immediately. It is illegal to sell and supply adulterated products containing banned substances or potent chemical ingredients. Sellers and suppliers are liable to prosecution and if convicted, may be imprisoned for up to 2 years and/or fined up to \$10,000.

8 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](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](https://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.

ANNEX A

**HSA ALERT: 'COCO CURV' & 'CHOCO FIT' FOUND TO CONTAIN BANNED SUBSTANCE; 'HAMER CANDY' DETECTED WITH POTENT INGREDIENT SIMILAR TO ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION MEDICINE**

**PICTURES OF THE THREE PRODUCTS**

**'Coco Curv'**

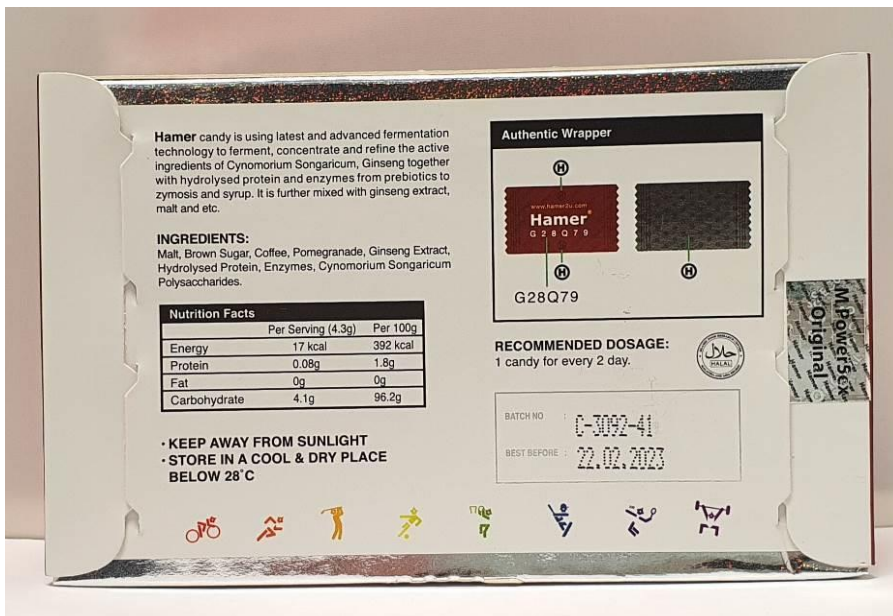




'Choco Fit'



# 'Hamer Candy'



**Sibutramine**

Sibutramine was previously a prescription-only-medicine for weight loss but has been banned in Singapore since 2010 because of an increased risk of heart attacks and strokes. Consumers reported adverse effects such as rapid heartbeat, insomnia (difficulty in sleeping) and suicidal thoughts. In the most serious case reported in 2019, a consumer experienced extremely fast heart rate and lost consciousness. She required resuscitation to save her life. She now suffers from severe heart failure and has been implanted with a defibrillator (a medical device to help her heart to function).

**Nortadalafil**

Nortadalafil is chemically related to tadalafil, a prescription medicine used to treat male erectile dysfunction. Tadalafil should only be used under medical supervision. Inappropriate use of tadalafil would put consumers at increased risk of serious adverse effects that include stroke, heart attack, low blood pressure and priapism (painful and exceedingly long erections). It should also not be used by patients who are taking heart medications, especially nitrates, as it can cause potentially life-threatening low blood pressure, which may lead to death. Due to their similar chemical structure, nortadalafil may cause similar adverse effects or even more toxic ones than tadalafil.