



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
PRESS RELEASE
30 DECEMBER 2021

HSA ALERT: FIVE PRODUCTS DETECTED TO CONTAIN POTENT ADULTERANTS; THREE CONSUMERS EXPERIENCED SERIOUS ADVERSE EFFECTS INCLUDING DIABETES

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is alerting members of the public to not purchase or consume five products which were marketed online. The five products are:

Product name	Potent adulterants detected
'X-Gout'	Dexamethasone; Indomethacin; Paracetamol; Piroxicam
'dcr Natural Herbs Honey Enzyme'	Paracetamol
'KMS2 Dark Chocolate Mocha Botanical Beverage'	Sulphamethoxydiazine; Amethocaine
'Speedy Slim Capsules (Black)'	Sibutramine
'Speedy Slim Capsules (Gold)'	Sibutramine

HSA tested the products and found that they contained potent adulterants, including medicinal ingredients and the banned substance sibutramine. These adulterants had caused serious adverse effects in consumers.

2 The products were sold on local e-commerce and social media platforms. HSA has worked with the platform administrators to promptly remove the affected listings and issued warnings to the respective sellers. Please refer to **Annex A** for photos of the products that were analysed by HSA and **Annex B** for more information about the possible adverse effects of the potent adulterants found in the products.

'X-GOUT' AND 'dcr NATURAL HERBS HONEY ENZYME' LED TO SERIOUS CONDITIONS IN TWO CONSUMERS

'X-Gout'

3 A woman in her 40s developed Cushing's syndrome, a life-threatening steroid-induced condition after taking 'X-Gout' for one year. Her friend had purchased the product via Shopee Malaysia on her behalf and encouraged her to use it for her knee pain. The woman gained 22 kilograms over a few months, experienced shortness of breath and swelling of the lower limb. She was diagnosed with diabetes when she consulted her doctor on the symptoms. As these symptoms indicated inappropriate steroid consumption, her doctor reported the case to HSA for investigation. HSA tested the product and detected four medicinal ingredients: dexamethasone, a steroid; indomethacin and piroxicam, which are both non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID), and paracetamol. Long-term unsupervised use of steroids such as dexamethasone can cause increased blood glucose levels (which may lead to diabetes), Cushing's syndrome (characterised by a round face or 'moon face' appearance, and upper body obesity with thin limbs), and other serious adverse effects.

'dcr Natural Herbs Honey Enzyme'

4 A man in his 40s developed Cushing's syndrome, a life-threatening steroid-induced condition, after taking 'dcr Natural Herbs Honey Enzyme' for about 6 months. When he stopped using the product, he experienced withdrawal symptoms such as loss of appetite, lower energy levels and subsequently, rashes on his body. Based on the man's symptoms, his doctor suspected that the product was adulterated with steroids and alerted HSA.

5 HSA obtained samples of the product which were tested and found to contain paracetamol. It cannot be ruled out that there may potentially be other adulterants or steroids present in other batches of the product, since Cushing's syndrome is often associated with long-term inappropriate consumption of steroids.

CONSUMERS' FEEDBACK AIDED IN DETECTION OF ADULTERATED PRODUCTS

'KMS2 Dark Chocolate Mocha Botanical Beverage'

6 HSA had received feedback from a member of the public who experienced side effects such as fast heartbeat, thirst, and dry mouth after consuming 'KMS2 Dark Chocolate Mocha Botanical Beverage' for a few days. The sellers had made claims that the product "speeds up fat burning by inducing heat, helps soothe digestive systems and boost metabolic cycles to reduce appetite and is safe without rebounding weight". HSA tested the product and found them to contain sulphamethoxydiazine, an antibacterial medicine, and amethocaine, an anaesthetic.

'Speedy Slim Capsules (Black)' and 'Speedy Slim Capsules (Gold)'

7 HSA detected and seized 'Speedy Slim Capsules (Black)' and 'Speedy Slim Capsules (Gold)' following feedback from members of the public that there were unapproved slimming products being sold on Instagram. These products made exaggerated claims such as "target at breaking down stubborn extra fat", "cut off starch absorption", and "losing weight and clearing fat". Both products were tested by HSA and were found to contain very high levels of sibutramine, a prescription-only weight loss medicine that has been banned since 2010 due to an increased risk of heart attack and stroke. Other serious adverse effects reported in the past by consumers who took products adulterated with sibutramine include insomnia and hallucinations. In 2019, a consumer experienced extremely fast heart rate and became unconscious. She was resuscitated and suffered debilitating consequences, including requiring the implantation of a defibrillator (a medical device) to help her heart to function.

ADVISORY TO CONSUMERS

8 Consumers are advised on the following:

- As 'X-Gout' contains a potent steroid, consumers who have taken this product should see a doctor as soon as possible. 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.

- Consumers who have taken 'dcr Natural herbs Honey Enzyme' should see a doctor as soon as possible, as there may potentially be potent ingredients in other batches of 'dcr Natural herbs Honey Enzyme' that have not been detected.
- Consumers should stop taking the weight loss products, 'KMS2 Dark Chocolate Mocha Botanical Beverage', 'Speedy Slim Capsules (Black)' and 'Speedy Slim Capsules (Gold)' immediately and consult a doctor if they feel unwell or are concerned about their health. There is no quick and easy way to lose weight. Weight control should be achieved through a combination of balanced diet and appropriate exercise. Those who need help managing their weight should consult a doctor, dietitian or a healthcare professional.
- Consumers should be wary of products that carry exaggerated claims or deliver unexpectedly quick results, such as fast weight loss or immediate pain relief. They can contain potent ingredients that can seriously harm your health.
- Consumers should exercise caution when buying such products online or from well-meaning friends as they cannot be certain where and how these products were made and whether they have been adulterated with harmful ingredients. Adulterated products are often manufactured under poor conditions with no quality control, and different batches of the same product may contain variable amounts of ingredients and/or different types of adulterants.
- Always consult your doctor or pharmacist if you need help to manage your chronic medical conditions.

ADVISORY TO SELLERS AND SUPPLIERS

9 All sellers and suppliers must stop selling these products immediately. HSA will not hesitate to take stern enforcement actions against anyone who sells and/or supplies products found to be adulterated with potent medicinal ingredients. Sellers and suppliers are liable to prosecution and if convicted, may be imprisoned for up to 3 years and/or fined up to \$100,000.

10 Members of the public who have any information on the sale and supply of the 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

30 DECEMBER 2021

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.

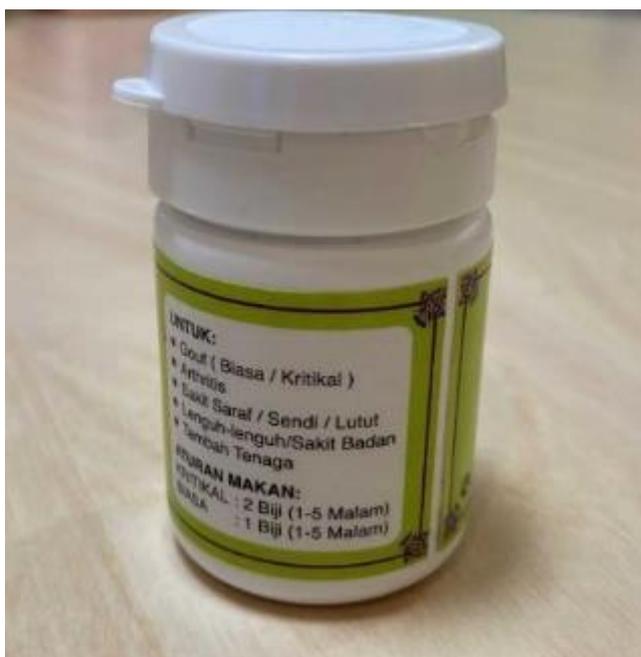
About HSA's Health Products Regulation Group

The Health Products Regulation Group (HPRG) of HSA ensures that medicines, 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.

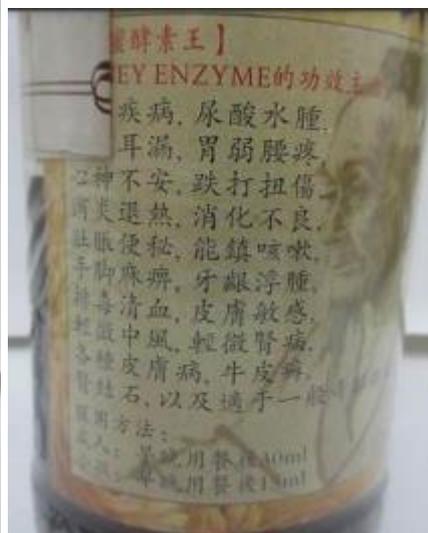
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PHOTOS OF THE PRODUCTS THAT WERE ANALYSED BY HSA

'X-Gout'



'dcr Natural Herbs Honey Enzyme'




天然蜂蜜【酵素王】
含天然古传秘方草药配制而成：

【糖胶树】 药用价值
糖胶树根、皮及叶均入药，能镇咳、消炎退热，止血生肌，治疟疾、气管炎、百日咳、哮喘、外伤、疮痍等。

【假苏梭】
功效主治~温中止痛。用于胃寒呕吐、呃逆、腹痛、腹泻。性味归经~辛，温。胃、大肠二经。

【红球姜】 功效主治：
辛，温。祛瘀消肿，解毒止痛。用于脘腹胀痛，消化不良，泄泻，跌打肿痛及解毒。

【穿心莲】 功效主治：
用于感冒发热，咽喉肿痛，口舌生疮，顿咳劳嗽，泄泻痢疾，热淋涩痛，痈肿疮疡，蛇虫咬伤。

【缙草】 功用主治
治心神不安，胃弱，腰痛，月经不调，跌打损伤。

医书记载
①《科学的民间药草》：“用于神经衰弱，精神不安。”
②《山东中药》：“治妇女经闭，月经困难。”
③《四川中药志》：“治脑神经及心、胃衰弱，慢性神经失常及尿频。”
④《陕西中药志》：“治心悸及腰痛。”
⑤《陕西中草药》：“安神镇静，驱风解痉，生肌止血，止痛。治瘰疬，疔山病，心脏病(心肌炎、产后心脏病、风湿性心脏病合并心力衰竭)，腰腿痛，胃肠痉挛，关节炎，跌打损伤，外伤出血。”


(Enzim Madu)
Madu Semula Jadi (Raja Enzim)
Diperbuat daripada resipi keturunanan dan mengandungi
Herba-Herba Semula Jadi

【Alstonia Scholaris】
-Akar, daun dan kulitnya boleh dijadikan ubat untuk mengubati batuk, asthma, luka, tracheitis, anti-radang dan lain lain

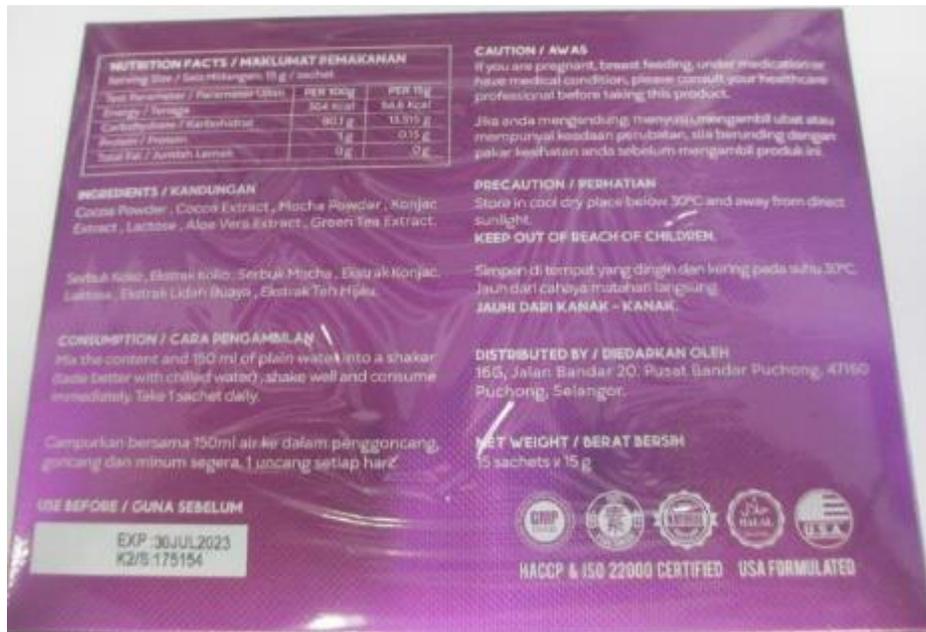
【Piper Retrofractum】
-Digunakan untuk melegakan sakit, muntah, sakit perut, cirit birit

【Bitter Ginger】
-Digunakan untuk mengurangkan bengkak, lebam, sakit dan detoksifikasi

【Green Chiretta】
-Digunakan untuk mengubati selesema, demam, sakit tekak, ulser, batuk dan lain lain.

【Valerian】
-Digunakan untuk mengubati sakit pinggang, haid yang tidak teratur dan lain lain.

'KMS2 Dark Chocolate Mocha Botanical Beverage'





'Speedy Slim Capsules (Black)'



'Speedy Slim Capsules (Gold)'



INFORMATION ON POTENT ADULTERANTS FOUND IN THE PRODUCTS

Amethocaine

Amethocaine is local anaesthetic used to numb or block pain and is usually applied on the skin. Accidental or inappropriate oral consumption may cause numbness of the tongue, tinnitus (ringing in the ears), nystagmus (involuntary, rapid and repetitive movement of the eyes), nausea or vomiting and twitching.

Dexamethasone

Dexamethasone is a steroid and is usually prescribed for inflammatory conditions which should only be used under strict medical supervision. Long-term unsupervised use of oral steroids can cause increased blood glucose levels (which may lead to diabetes), as well as high blood pressure, cataracts, muscular and bone disorders, an increased risk of infections and Cushing's syndrome.

Piroxicam and indomethacin

Piroxicam and indomethacin are non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID) used to treat pain and inflammation. It can cause gastrointestinal adverse effects such as nausea and vomiting and gastric bleeding as well as elevated liver enzymes. Other adverse effects that can occur with prolonged usage include heart problems and fluid retention.

Paracetamol

Paracetamol is available over the counter for the relief of fever and pain. Rare adverse effects include hypersensitivity reactions such as rash.

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).

Sulphamethoxydiazine

Sulphamethoxydiazine is an antibacterial medicine. The inappropriate use of sulphamethoxydiazine may lead to rashes, hypersensitivity and allergic reactions, including the serious skin reaction, Stevens Johnson syndrome (SJS).