

HSA ALERT: “HW BEAUTY SERBUK CAMPURAN KURMA, MADU & LIMAU KASTURI”, A HERBAL PRODUCT DETECTED TO CONTAIN POTENT STEROIDS AND ANTI-INFLAMMATORY PAINKILLER

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is alerting members of the public not to purchase or use "HW Beauty Serbuk Campuran Kurma, Madu & Limau Kasturi", a herbal product and to seek medical attention if they have consumed the product. HSA's tests revealed that the product contained two potent steroids (dexamethasone and prednisolone) and an anti-inflammatory painkiller (diclofenac) which can cause serious adverse effects. Please refer to **Annex A** for photos of the product.

2 HSA tested “HW Beauty Serbuk Campuran Kurma, Madu & Limau Kasturi”, following feedback from members of the public that the product unexpectedly provided instant pain relief and was similar to another adulterated product¹ which HSA had alerted the public in April this year. Over the past weeks, HSA has also received a few suspected adverse event reports associated with this product. These included serious events of acute kidney injuries and Cushing’s syndrome, a serious medical condition characterised by a round face or “moon face” appearance. Two patients were hospitalised earlier in November and have since been discharged. Review of these cases are ongoing.

3 “HW Beauty Serbuk Campuran Kurma, Madu & Limau Kasturi” was sold through various channels, including local e-commerce platforms such as Shopee, Carousell and Lazada, social media platforms such as Tik Tok and local retail shops. It is marketed as a “traditional herbal supplement passed down through generations”

¹ <https://www.hsa.gov.sg/announcements/press-release/hsa-alert-setia-herba-detected-to-contain-potent-steroids-and-anti-inflammatory-painkiller>

to relieve multiple medical conditions including joint pain and gout. The product was touted to be “steroid-free”, a “genuine product” of “premium quality” which could deceive consumers that the product was safe. HSA has worked with the local e-commerce platform administrators to remove listings of the product, and asked that they block or remove any future listings of the product.

Harmful effects from unsupervised use of steroids and anti-inflammatory painkiller

4 Dexamethasone and prednisolone are potent steroids that are prescribed for inflammatory conditions and should only be used under strict medical supervision. Long-term unsupervised use of steroids can cause increased blood sugar levels which could lead to diabetes, high blood pressure, cataracts, muscular and bone disorders such as osteoporosis, an increased risk of infections and Cushing’s syndrome. Discontinuation of steroids without proper medical supervision can lead to steroid withdrawal effects and adrenal insufficiency (a serious steroid withdrawal condition, where the body does not produce adequate amounts of steroid hormones after stopping long-term steroid use). This may cause fatigue, generalised weakness, muscle and joint pain, low blood pressure, fits or shock.

5 Diclofenac is a potent anti-inflammatory painkiller that should be used under close medical supervision, especially in consumers with underlying heart or kidney conditions. It can cause serious gastric bleeding, as well as cardiovascular events such as heart attacks and stroke when used for a prolonged period, and can also worsen kidney function in patients with pre-existing kidney problems.

Advisory to consumers

6 Consumers who have used "HW Beauty Serbuk Campuran Kurma, Madu & Limau Kasturi" should seek medical attention immediately.

7 Consumers are advised to be **ALERT** when purchasing health products:

- **AVOID** Dubious Products: Steer clear of products from unknown or unverified sources, especially online - they may contain harmful ingredients.
- **LOOK** for Reputable Sellers: Only purchase from trusted pharmacies or well-known retailers with an established presence in Singapore.
- **EXAMINE** Claims: Be cautious and wary of products that claim to have miraculous results, or “no side effects”.
- **REPORT** Suspicious Products: Help protect others by reporting dangerous or dubious products to HSA.
- **TRUST** Medical Advice. Consult a healthcare professional if you need help managing your chronic medical conditions instead of risking your health with use of unfamiliar products.

Advisory to sellers and suppliers

8 All sellers and suppliers must stop selling "HW Beauty Serbuk Campuran Kurma, Madu & Limau Kasturi" immediately. HSA will not hesitate to take stern enforcement actions against anyone who sells and supplies products found to be adulterated with potent 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.

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

ANNEX A

HSA ALERT: "HW BEAUTY SERBUK CAMPURAN KURMA, MADU & LIMAU KASTURI" DETECTED TO CONTAIN POTENT STEROIDS AND ANTI-INFLAMMATORY PAINKILLER

Photos of "HW Beauty Serbuk Campuran Kurma, Madu & Limau Kasturi " tested by HSA



