



HSA ALERT: TWO CONSUMERS EXPERIENCED ADVERSE EFFECTS AFTER TAKING PRODUCTS WITH POTENT UNDECLARED INGREDIENTS

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is alerting members of the public not to purchase or consume two products:

Product name	Potent adulterants detected
'Traditional Herbs Preparation XPE'	Chloramphenicol; Chlorpheniramine; Dexamethasone; Ibuprofen; Lovastatin; Tetracycline
'FS++ Slimming Supplements By JPJ Slim'	Sibutramine

HSA tested the products and found that one contained potent medicinal ingredients, while the other contained the banned substance sibutramine. These adulterants can cause serious adverse effects in individuals. 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 adulterants found in the products.

Joint pain worsened upon reducing or stopping 'Traditional Herbs Preparation XPE'

2 A woman in her 60s had been taking 'Traditional Herbs Preparation XPE' for over nine months to alleviate her joint pain. She received it from a friend who obtained it in Malaysia. The product label listed a variety of natural herbs as its ingredients and was marketed for general health. Although the consumer experienced a quick relief of her joint pain, it worsened when she stopped taking it or reduced the dose. This raised her doctor's

suspicion that the product may contain undeclared potent ingredients such as steroids or painkillers.

3 HSA tested the product and detected six medicinal ingredients: dexamethasone (a steroid), chlorpheniramine (an antihistamine), ibuprofen (a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug), lovastatin (a cholesterol-lowering medicine), chloramphenicol and tetracycline (both antibiotics). 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 central obesity with thin limbs), and other serious adverse effects.

Banned substance in 'FS++ Slimming Supplements By JPJ Slim' caused insomnia, headache and confusion

4 HSA received feedback from a consumer who experienced insomnia, headache and confusion after taking 'FS++ Slimming Supplements By JPJ Slim'. The product was purchased via a local social media platform that carried consumer testimonials on its quick slimming results. It was packaged in a bottle labelled with minimal information – "60 capsules", "Made in Thailand" and a website link. HSA tested the product and detected sibutramine, a weight loss medicine that has been banned in Singapore since 2010 due to an increased risk of heart attack and stroke. The continued intake of this product could have led to serious health consequences such as heart problems and central nervous system disorders (e.g., psychosis and hallucinations). The product was also found to be sold by the same seller on other social media platforms. HSA has worked with the platform administrators to promptly remove the affected listings. Investigation against the seller is ongoing.

Advisory to consumers

5 Consumers are advised on the following:

- See a doctor as soon as possible if you have taken 'Traditional Herbs Preparation XPE' as it contains a potent steroid. 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.

- Stop taking 'FS++ Slimming Supplements By JPJ Slim' immediately and consult a doctor if you feel unwell or are concerned about your health.
- Be wary of products that deliver quick effects or carry exaggerated claims. They can contain potent ingredients that can seriously harm your health.
- Exercise caution when buying such products online or from well-meaning friends as you 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.
- There is no quick and easy way to lose weight. Weight control should be achieved through a combination of balanced diet and appropriate exercise. If you need help managing your weight, please consult your doctor, dietitian or a healthcare professional.

Advisory to sellers and suppliers

6 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 2 years and/or fined up to \$10,000.

7 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

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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.

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.

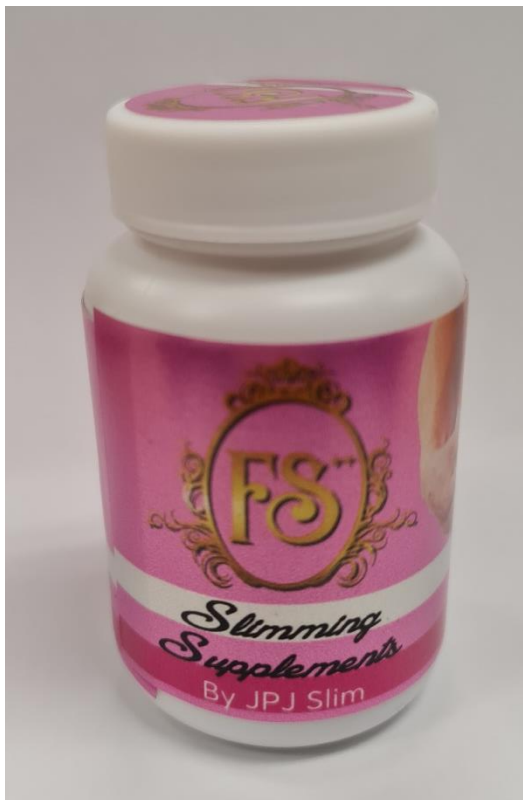
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PHOTOS OF THE PRODUCTS THAT WERE ANALYSED BY HSA

‘Traditional Herbs Preparation XPE’



'FS++ Slimming Supplements By JPJ Slim'



INFORMATION ON POTENT ADULTERANTS FOUND IN THE PRODUCTS

Chloramphenicol and tetracycline

Chloramphenicol and tetracycline are antibiotics used to treat bacterial infections. They are prescription-only medicines and should be used under medical supervision. Chloramphenicol can potentially cause serious side effects including liver injury, vomiting, diarrhea, nausea and headaches. The adverse effects of tetracycline include teeth discolouration and increased skin sensitivity to sunlight.

Chlorpheniramine

Chlorpheniramine is an antihistamine used to relieve allergic reactions such as hives and rhinitis. It should be used under medical supervision. Side effects from the use of chlorpheniramine include drowsiness, blurred vision, vomiting, constipation and poor coordination.

Dexamethasone

Dexamethasone is a 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 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.

Ibuprofen

Ibuprofen is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) used to treat pain and inflammation. It can cause gastrointestinal adverse effects such as nausea, 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.

Lovastatin

Lovastatin is a prescription medicine used to treat high cholesterol and should be used under medical supervision. The side effects associated with lovastatin use include constipation, joint pain and stomach pain.

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)