



HSA ALERT: FOUR PRODUCTS SOLD ONLINE FOUND TO CONTAIN POTENT OR BANNED INGREDIENTS INCLUDING HIGH LEVELS OF ARSENIC AND SIBUTRAMINE; TWO CONSUMERS SUFFERED ADVERSE EFFECTS

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is alerting members of the public not to purchase or use ‘EUZEMA Confidence Revival Cream’, ‘HONEY Q Dietary Supplement Product’, ‘SLIME 7D ADVANCE Slimming Pill’ and ‘FINO^S’. Two consumers experienced adverse effects after using two of these products. HSA has tested these products and found that they contain potent or banned ingredients (refer to table below).

Product name	Potent or banned ingredients	Source
‘EUZEMA Confidence Revival Cream’	Arsenic (toxic heavy metal) Betamethasone (potent steroid) Salicylic acid (exfoliating agent)	Retail website and local e-commerce platforms
‘HONEY Q Dietary Supplement Product’	Sibutramine (banned medicinal substance) Benzyl sibutramine (banned substance) Fluoxetine (antidepressant) Diphenhydramine (antihistamine)	Local e-commerce platforms
‘SLIME 7D ADVANCE Slimming Pill’	Sibutramine (banned medicinal substance)	Local e-commerce platforms
‘FINO ^S ’	Orlistat (weight loss medicine) Sennosides (laxative)	Local e-commerce and social media platforms

Please refer to **Annex A** for photos of the products and **Annex B** for more information on the potent or banned ingredients.

2 'EUZEMA Confidence Revival Cream' was sold on a retail website (www.euzema.com) based in Malaysia and Carousell, a local e-commerce platform. 'HONEY Q Dietary Supplement Product', 'SLIME 7D ADVANCE Slimming Pill' and 'FINO^S' were sold on multiple local e-commerce and social media platforms, including Lazada, Qoo10, Shopee and eBay. HSA has worked with the local platform administrators to remove the affected listings. Two sellers are assisting with investigations. HSA has also alerted its Malaysian counterpart to these products as they were labelled to be manufactured in Malaysia and sold by sellers or websites based in Malaysia.

Consumer had skin reaction after using 'EUZEMA Confidence Revival Cream' for eczema

3 A man in his 30s suffered a skin reaction, purpura (purplish red spots due to small bleeds under the skin), after using 'EUZEMA Confidence Revival Cream' for his eczema for a year. His doctor suspected that the adverse skin reaction was caused by 'realgar', a mineral containing arsenic that was labelled on the cream and reported it to HSA. The patient had purchased the cream from www.euzema.com. The website had claimed that the cream is 'able to beat eczema for good with this powerful natural formula', 'steroid-free', 'contain 100% all-natural herbs' and 'has no side-effects'. HSA tested it to contain very high levels of arsenic (over 430 times higher than the allowable limits¹), betamethasone and salicylic acid.

4 Arsenic is a toxic heavy metal. It can cause skin irritations, contact dermatitis (with symptoms such as skin rashes and blisters) or rashes resulting in skin peeling when applied externally. Widespread, prolonged application of products containing high levels of arsenic may lead to arsenic poisoning. Betamethasone is a potent steroid which should only be used under strict medical supervision as it can cause

¹ <https://www.hsa.gov.sg/traditional-medicines/overview>

serious adverse effects if used inappropriately. Salicylic acid is used to treat common skin conditions such as acne, psoriasis and dandruff, and could lead to dry, irritated and red skin if used in high amounts.

Consumer experienced adverse reactions after taking slimming product that claimed to be herbal and natural

5 HSA received feedback from members of the public regarding the online sale of 'HONEY Q Dietary Supplement Product', 'SLIME 7D ADVANCE Slimming Pill' and 'FINO^S'. One consumer experienced vomiting and headache after taking 'FINO^S'. All three products were sold for weight loss and claimed to be 'herbal and natural'. 'SLIME 7D ADVANCE Slimming Pill' additionally claimed to have 'no banned substances'.

6 Contrary to the product claims, HSA tested and detected potent medicinal ingredients, including sibutramine, benzyl sibutramine, fluoxetine and orlistat in the product. 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. The use of sibutramine and benzyl sibutramine may cause serious adverse effects, including high blood pressure, increased heart rate, anxiety and heart attacks. Fluoxetine is a prescription-only medicine that should only be used under medical supervision, while orlistat is a pharmacy-only medicine that should be used under the supervision of a pharmacist or doctor.

Advisory to consumers

7 Consumers are advised to:

- See a doctor as soon as possible if you are using 'EUZEMA Confidence Revival Cream' as it contains arsenic and a potent steroid, which can cause serious health hazards. Long-term steroid use can suppress the body's production of steroids and sudden stopping without medical supervision may cause serious

withdrawal symptoms such as adrenal insufficiency² leading to confusion, muscle and joint pain, low blood pressure and fits or shocks.

- Stop taking 'HONEY Q Dietary Supplement Product', 'SLIME 7D ADVANCE Slimming Pill' and 'FINO^S' immediately and consult a doctor if you feel unwell or are concerned about your 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. If you need help managing your weight, please consult your doctor or dietitian.
- Be wary of products that promise miraculous recovery from chronic medical conditions, or claim to 'contain 100% all-natural herbs/ingredients' or 'has no side effects'. Such products may contain undeclared ingredients that may harm your health.
- Exercise caution when buying products from unknown or unfamiliar sources online as you cannot be certain where and how these products were made and whether they have been adulterated with harmful ingredients. Only buy from reputable pharmacies or retailers' websites or those with an established retail presence in Singapore. 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.

Advisory to sellers and suppliers

8 All sellers and suppliers must stop selling these products immediately. HSA will not hesitate to take stern enforcement actions against anyone who sells and supplies products found to be adulterated with banned and prohibited substances or potent

² Adrenal insufficiency occurs when the body is not able to produce adequate amounts of steroid hormone (cortisol). This can lead to fatigue, muscle and joint pain, low blood pressure, fits or shock.

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 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
21 NOVEMBER 2023**

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 'EUZEMA Confidence Revival Cream' that was tested by HSA



Photos of 'Honey Q Dietary Supplement Product' that was tested by HSA



Photos of 'SLIME 7D ADVANCE Slimming Pill' that was tested by HSA



Photos of 'FINO^S' that was tested by HSA



POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF POTENT OR BANNED INGREDIENTS FOUND IN THE PRODUCTS

Arsenic

Arsenic is a toxic heavy metal. It can cause skin irritations, contact dermatitis (with symptoms such as skin rashes and blisters) or rashes resulting in skin peeling when applied externally. Widespread, prolonged application of products containing high levels of arsenic may lead to arsenic poisoning resulting in symptoms such as vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, breathing difficulties and numbness of limbs.

Betamethasone

Betamethasone is a potent steroid that is usually prescribed for inflammatory conditions and should only be used under strict medical supervision. Adverse effects associated with the topical use of steroids include hypersensitivity reactions and thinning of the skin. They may also be absorbed into the body and cause serious adverse effects such as Cushing's syndrome (characterised by a round face or 'moon face' and upper body obesity with thin limbs) and high blood pressure, when applied to large areas of the skin or used over a prolonged period.

Salicylic acid

Salicylic acid is used to treat common skin conditions such as acne, psoriasis and dandruff. The use of products with high levels of salicylic acid could lead to dry, irritated, and red skin.

Sibutramine

Sibutramine was 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. Other serious adverse effects including fast heart rate, hallucinations or hearing voices have also been reported by consumers who took slimming products adulterated with sibutramine.

Fluoxetine

Fluoxetine is a prescription-only-medicine used to treat depression and psychiatric disorders, including eating disorders, and should only be used under medical supervision. Adverse effects of fluoxetine include insomnia, headache, fast or irregular heartbeat, diarrhoea and nausea.

Diphenhydramine

Diphenhydramine is an antihistamine used to relieve allergic conditions, such as hives and rhinitis and symptoms of cold and flu. It should be used under medical

supervision. Adverse effects of diphenhydramine include drowsiness, blurred vision and constipation.

Orlistat

Orlistat is a pharmacy-only medicine used in the management of obesity. This medicine should be used under the supervision of a healthcare professional. The inappropriate use of orlistat can cause headaches, abdominal pain, oily discharge from rectum, liquid stools, flatulence and fatigue.

Sennoside

Sennoside is a laxative that is used for the relief of constipation. Adverse effects associated with its use include diarrhoea, dehydration and loss of essential minerals. Prolonged use may cause chronic constipation, fluid and electrolyte abnormalities, bloating and abdominal pain.