



HSA ALERT: CHILD EXPERIENCED SERIOUS ADVERSE EFFECTS AFTER USING RASH CREAM SOLD AT A MAKESHIFT STALL

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is alerting members of the public not to purchase or use ‘Tao Ju Hui Yi Mei Li Shang Kou Hu Li Ruan Gao’ (‘淘聚汇益美丽伤口护理软膏’), which led to symptoms of Cushing’s syndrome (a serious medical condition caused by prolonged use of steroids) in a child. HSA’s analysis of this product revealed that it contained four potent medicinal ingredients including two steroids.

Product name	Potent adulterants detected
‘Tao Ju Hui Yi Mei Li Shang Kou Hu Li Ruan Gao’ (‘淘聚汇益美丽 伤口护理软膏’)	Chloramphenicol Clobetasol propionate Dexamethasone Ketoconazole

Please refer to [Annex A](#) for photos of the product and [Annex B](#) for more information on the medicinal ingredients found in it.

Use of ‘Tao Ju Hui Yi Mei Li Shang Kou Hu Li Ruan Gao’ led to serious adverse effects in child

2 A four-year-old child was taken to the hospital to seek treatment for upper respiratory tract infection and was found to have symptoms of Cushing’s syndrome such as a “moon” face, excessive hair growth on the body and thinning of skin. The child’s parents had been using ‘Tao Ju Hui Yi Mei Li Shang Kou Hu Li Ruan Gao’ on the child regularly for rash over the past 4 months. They had purchased the product from a local peddler at a makeshift stall in Eunos.

3 HSA's checks found that 'Tao Ju Hui Yi Mei Li Shang Kou Hu Li Ruan Gao' was also sold on local e-commerce platforms (Shopee, Lazada), Facebook, and a website called "Feili Health House" (feilihealthhouse.online). HSA has worked with the local e-commerce platform administrators and Facebook to remove the affected product listings. The makeshift stall in Eunos is no longer in operation. HSA is currently investigating the website "Feili Health House".

4 The product was marketed online as a "baby cream", and was labelled to be "used for the care of small wounds, cuts and abrasion" and "acts as a physical barrier by forming a protective layer on the wound surface". The product was also falsely labelled to "contain ingredients that cannot be absorbed by the body" and that the "ingredients contained have no medicinal effects". On the contrary, HSA detected chloramphenicol (antibiotic), clobetasol propionate and dexamethasone (steroids), and ketoconazole (antifungal) in the cream. These ingredients can pose serious health risks, especially in children, if used without medical supervision.

5 HSA would like to reiterate the dangers of purchasing health products from unknown sources, especially for use in babies and children as they are at higher risk of experiencing adverse effects from undeclared potent ingredients. In 2022, HSA detected potent ingredients including steroids in two other topical products marketed for young children. These are 'Star Cream'¹ and 'Jolicare'², with the use of 'Star Cream' leading to steroid toxicity in a four-month-old infant.

Advisory to parents and consumers

6 Parents and consumers are advised on the following:

- See a doctor as soon as possible if your child or other family members are using 'Tao Ju Hui Yi Mei Li Shang Kou Hu Li Ruan Gao' as it contains potent medicinal

¹ <https://www.hsa.gov.sg/announcements/press-release/StarCream-infant-hospitalised-for-serious-adverse-reaction>

² <https://www.hsa.gov.sg/announcements/press-release/hsa-alert-five-products-detected-to-contain-potent-medicinal-ingredients>

ingredients, including steroids. Sudden stopping of the cream without medical supervision may result in the worsening of underlying skin conditions and other serious withdrawal symptoms such as fatigue, confusion and low blood pressure.

- Exercise caution when purchasing products for use in babies and children, as they are more vulnerable to serious adverse effects. These products include those that are applied on the skin such as creams. Potent ingredients added into the creams can be absorbed into the body and cause adverse effects. Consult a doctor if your child requires prolonged treatment to ensure that the products used are appropriate.
- When purchasing online, only buy from reputable pharmacies and retailers' websites or those with an established retail presence in Singapore.

Advisory to sellers and suppliers

7 All sellers and suppliers must stop selling 'Tao Ju Hui Yi Mei Li Shang Kou Hu Li Ruan Gao' 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 who are selling 'Tao Ju Hui Yi Mei Li Shang Kou Hu Li Ruan Gao' are liable to be prosecuted and if convicted, may be imprisoned for up to 3 years and/or fined up to \$100,000.

8 Members of the public who have any information on the sale and supply of 'Tao Ju Hui Yi Mei Li Shang Kou Hu Li Ruan Gao' 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 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 'TAO JU HUI YI MEI LI SHANG KOU HU LI RUAN GAO (淘聚汇益美丽 伤口护理软膏)' THAT WAS TESTED BY HSA



POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF POTENT INGREDIENTS FOUND IN 'TAO JU HUI YI MEI LI SHANG KOU HU LI RUAN GAO (淘聚汇益美丽 伤口护理软膏)'

Clobetasol propionate and dexamethasone

Clobetasol propionate and dexamethasone are potent steroids that are usually prescribed for inflammatory conditions and should only be used under strict medical supervision. Long-term unsupervised use of steroids (including topical use where the steroid can be absorbed into the body) can cause increased blood glucose levels (which may lead to diabetes), high blood pressure, cataracts, muscular and bone disorders, an increased risk of infections and Cushing's syndrome (characterised by a round face or 'moon face' appearance and upper body obesity with thin limbs). 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.

Chloramphenicol

Chloramphenicol is an antibiotic used to treat bacterial infections. Antibiotics are prohibited in skincare cosmetic products and antibiotics (including in creams) should only be used under medical supervision. Inappropriate use of antibiotics without medical supervision can lead to its decreased effectiveness. Other possible adverse effects associated with the use of topical antibiotics include skin irritation, skin rash, itching of the skin and hypersensitivity reactions.

Ketoconazole

Ketoconazole is a medicine used to treat fungal infections. The possible adverse effects associated with the inappropriate use of creams containing ketoconazole may include skin irritation, itching of the skin, skin rash and impetigo (skin infection).