



**HSA ALERT: ‘D’SIHAT HERBA GOUT & SENDI’ & ‘YANWO CHONGCAO YANYIN QINFEI HUATAN DAN’ FOUND TO CONTAIN POTENT MEDICINAL INGREDIENTS; ONE CONSUMER HOSPITALISED, ANOTHER HAD SERIOUS ADVERSE EFFECTS**

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is alerting members of the public not to purchase or consume two adulterated products, namely ‘D’SIHAT HERBA GOUT & SENDI’ and ‘Yanwo Chongcao Yanyin Qinfei Huatan Dan’ (‘海马牌燕窝冬虫夏草 養陰清肺化痰丹’). HSA’s analysis of the products revealed that they contained steroids and other potent medicinal ingredients which can cause serious adverse effects in consumers.

Product name	Potent medicinal ingredients	Source
‘D’SIHAT HERBA GOUT & SENDI’	Dexamethasone (steroid); Chlorpheniramine, Promethazine (antihistamines)	Obtained from Malaysia through a friend
‘Yanwo Chongcao Yanyin Qinfei Huatan Dan’ ‘海马牌燕窝冬虫夏草 養陰清肺化痰丹’	Dexamethasone, Prednisolone (steroids); Chlorpheniramine, Promethazine (antihistamines)	Obtained from Malaysia through a friend

Please refer to **Annex A** for photos of the product and **Annex B** for more information on the medicinal ingredients found in the product.

## **Two consumers experienced steroid-induced adverse effects**

2 A woman in her 50s developed Cushing's syndrome (a serious steroid-induced condition characterised by a round or 'moon face' appearance) and was hospitalised after taking 'D'SIHAT HERBA GOUT & SENDI' for seven months for her knee pain. She also experienced weight gain, lower limb swelling and had elevated blood sugar level. Subsequently, she was diagnosed with adrenal insufficiency<sup>1</sup> (a serious steroid withdrawal condition, where the body does not produce adequate amounts of steroid hormones) after stopping the product.

3 Another woman in her 40s had abnormal blood cortisol levels<sup>2</sup> after consuming 'Yanwo Chongcao Yanyin Qinfei Huatan Dan' for two months for her chronic cough. Her astute doctor suspected that the product was adulterated and reported the case to HSA.

4 Both consumers had obtained these products from Malaysia through their friends. HSA has alerted its Malaysian counterpart to the detection of the adulterated products. HSA has also detected that the products were sold on local e-commerce and social media platforms, including Shopee and Facebook and has worked with the platform administrators to remove the affected listings. Investigations are ongoing.

5 'D'SIHAT HERBA GOUT & SENDI' was marketed for the relief of pain and falsely labelled to be free of steroids, while 'Yanwo Chongcao Yanyin Qinfei Huatan Dan' was marketed to relieve cough and touted as "100% Natural Pure Herbal". Contrary to the claims, HSA tested them to contain steroids and other potent medicinal ingredients. Long-term unsupervised use of steroids such as dexamethasone can cause Cushing's syndrome, increased blood sugar levels which may lead to diabetes, high blood pressure and other serious adverse effects.

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<sup>1</sup> Adrenal insufficiency can lead to fatigue, generalised weakness, muscle and joint pain, low blood pressure, fits or shock.

<sup>2</sup> Potent steroids may suppress the normal production of cortisol, a natural steroid hormone produced by the body. This can lead to adrenal insufficiency.

## **Advisory to consumers**

6 Consumers are advised to:

- See a doctor as soon as possible if you are taking these products as they contain potent medicinal ingredients including steroids. Long-term steroid use can suppress the body's production of steroids. Sudden stopping of the product without medical supervision may worsen underlying medical conditions or cause other serious withdrawal conditions such as adrenal insufficiency.
- Exercise caution when buying products from unknown or unverifiable sources, such as from overseas, online or even from well-meaning friends or relatives, 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 amount of ingredients and/or different types of adulterants.
- Always consult your doctor or pharmacist if you need to manage your chronic medical conditions.
- Be wary of products that deliver unexpectedly quick effects such as fast relief of chronic medical conditions, or that carry exaggerated claims, while claiming to be "herbal", "natural" or 'steroid-free'. Contrary to claims on their labels, they can contain potent ingredients that can seriously harm your health.

## **Advisory to sellers and suppliers**

7 All sellers and suppliers must stop selling 'D'SIHAT HERBA GOUT & SENDI' and 'Yanwo Chongcao Yanyin Qinfei Huatan Dan' 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 of

these products are liable to prosecution and if convicted, may be fined up to \$10,000 and/or imprisoned for up to 2 years.

8 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](mailto: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](http://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 'D'SIHAT HERBA GOUT & SENDI' THAT WAS TESTED BY HSA**



**PHOTOS OF 'YANWO CHONGCAO YANYIN QINFEI HUATAN DAN' THAT WAS TESTED BY HSA**



## **POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF POTENT INGREDIENTS FOUND IN THE PRODUCTS**

### **Chlorpheniramine**

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

### **Dexamethasone and prednisolone**

Dexamethasone and prednisolone 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 can cause increased blood sugar levels which may lead to diabetes, high blood pressure, cataracts, muscular and bone disorders (including osteoporosis), an increased risk of infections and Cushing's syndrome. Discontinuation of steroids without proper medical supervision can lead to adrenal insufficiency.

### **Promethazine**

Promethazine is an antihistamine used to relieve allergic conditions, symptoms of cold and flu, prevention of motion sickness, nausea, vomiting and for short-term sedation. It should be used under medical supervision. Adverse effects from the use of promethazine include drowsiness, blurred vision and constipation.