

# DH investigates case of undeclared Western drug ingredient detected in cream product prescribed by registered Chinese medicine practitioner (with photo)

The Department of Health (DH) today (July 6) urged clients who consulted a registered Chinese medicine practitioner (CMP), KU Chu-yu, practising at Room 11, 2/F, Fu Tao Building, 98 Argyle Street, Mong Kok, Kowloon, should take note of a cream product he prescribed as it contained undeclared Western drug ingredients.

Acting upon a notification of suspected poisoning case reported by the Hospital Authority recently, the DH raided the above CMP's premises and seized a quantity of cream product for analysis. Today, test result from the Government Laboratory confirmed that sample of an unlabelled yellow cream product (see photo) contained undeclared Western drug ingredients namely clobetasol propionate, terbinafine and miconazole. In response to the relevant event, a man aged 39 was arrested by the Police today for illegal possession of Part 1 poisons and unregistered pharmaceutical product.

Clobetasol propionate is a corticosteroid and prescription medicine for treating inflammation. Inappropriate use of corticosteroids may cause serious side effects such as Cushing's syndrome, with symptoms including moon face and muscle atrophy. Terbinafine and miconazole are antifungal medicines commonly used for the treatment of fungal infections of the skin. They can cause side effects such as itching, irritation and allergic reaction when used topically.

While investigations are still ongoing, the DH has instructed the above CMP to contact his concerned clients for medical surveillance. The DH will set up a hotline (2961 8745) for public enquiries related to the yellow cream product prescribed by the CMP. The hotline will operate from 9am to 5pm from Mondays to Fridays (except public holidays) starting tomorrow (July 7).

According to the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Cap 138), illegal possession of Part 1 poisons and unregistered pharmaceutical products are criminal offences. The maximum penalty for each offence is a fine of \$100,000 and two years' imprisonment. Upon completion of the investigations, the DH will consult the Department of Justice on prosecution matters. The DH would refer the case to the Chinese Medicine Council of Hong Kong for consideration of possible disciplinary action.

Members of the public who have been prescribed with medicines by the above CMP who feel unwell or are in doubt should consult health-care

professionals as soon as possible. They may submit the medicines to the DH's Chinese Medicine Regulatory Office at 16/F, AIA Kowloon Tower, Landmark East, 100 How Ming Street, Kwun Tong, Kowloon, during office hours for disposal.

