

DH requires manufacturer to recall unregistered proprietary Chinese medicine for external use (with photo)

The Department of Health (DH) today (April 2) announced that a licensed manufacturer of proprietary Chinese medicines (pCm), Merika Medicine Factory Ltd (Merika), located on Wong Chuk Yeung Street, Fo Tan, New Territories, had not manufactured a pCm for external use called "Golden Statue Cinnamon Oil & Embrocation" according to the registered particulars and was therefore suspected of illegal sale and possession of unregistered pCm. The DH has immediately requested Merika to recall the batch of product concerned (batch number: 427141) from the market.

During an inspection yesterday (April 1), the DH found that the above-mentioned pCm manufacturer was suspected to have changed one of the active ingredients from Cinnamon Oil to Ceylon Cinnamon Leaf Oil during the production of a registered pCm named "Golden Statue Cinnamon Oil & Embrocation" (Registration number: HKC-02106), without the approval of the Chinese Medicine Council of Hong Kong (CMCHK). According to the Chinese Medicine Ordinance (Cap.549), since the product did not match the registered particulars of the registered pCm, the batch of the product concerned is therefore an unregistered pCm.

According to section 119 of the Ordinance, no person shall sell, import or possess any pCm unless it is registered. The maximum penalty is a fine of \$100,000 and two years' imprisonment. The DH will seek advice from the Department of Justice on prosecution matters upon completion of the investigation and will refer the case to the CMCHK for consideration of possible disciplinary action.

According to its label, the above product, in liniment form, is used to expel wind and relieve pain and itching. Although Cinnamon Oil and Ceylon Cinnamon Leaf Oil come from different species of plants within the same family and have similar actions, the safety, efficacy and quality of unregistered pCm had not been assessed. Members of the public who have purchased the batch of the product should stop using it immediately. Those who have used the above product and feel unwell should seek advice from healthcare professionals. As instructed by the DH, Merika is conducting the above-mentioned recall and has set up a hotline (2699 1410) for related enquiries.

The DH is continuing to investigate the case and will closely monitor the recall. So far, no adverse reports related to the use of the above product have been received by the DH.

Apart from returning the product to Merika, people who have the batch of the product concerned may submit it to the DH's Chinese Medicine Regulatory

Office on 16/F, AIA Kowloon Tower, Landmark East, 100 How Ming Street, Kwun Tong, during office hours for disposal.

