

Public urged not to buy or use topical products containing undeclared controlled ingredients (with photo)

The Department of Health (DH) today (June 17) appealed to the public not to buy or use four types of topical products as they were found to contain undeclared controlled drug ingredients. These products include:

Product name	Part 1 poisons found
1. Zangyao xuanduwang	Clobetasol propionate, ketoconazole and miconazole
2. King poison to itch Antibacterial cream	Clobetasol propionate, ketoconazole and miconazole
3. HE SHENG MEI LANG DU WANG	Clobetasol propionate, ketoconazole and miconazole
4. ZHONG HUA ZHEN JUN WANG Antibacterial cream	Clobetasol propionate and miconazole

Acting upon intelligence, the DH has collected samples of the above-mentioned products from a retail stall in Tuen Mun for analysis. Test results from the Government Laboratory revealed that the above products contained undeclared controlled drug ingredients, which are Part 1 poisons under the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Cap. 138). These products are also suspected to be unregistered pharmaceutical products. The DH, in collaboration with the Police, took enforcement action at the premises today. During the operation, a 51-year-old woman was arrested for suspected illegal sale and possession of Part 1 poisons and unregistered pharmaceutical products. The DH's investigation is still ongoing.

Clobetasol propionate is a steroid substance for treating inflammation. Inappropriate application of steroids could cause skin problems and systemic side effects such as moon face, high blood pressure, high blood sugar, adrenal insufficiency and osteoporosis. Products containing clobetasol propionate are prescription medicines that should be used under a doctor's directions and be supplied in the premises of an Authorized Seller of Poisons (i.e. a pharmacy) under the supervision of a registered pharmacist upon a doctor's prescription. Ketoconazole and miconazole are used for the treatment of fungal infections with side effects including local irritation and sensitivity reactions. Topical products containing ketoconazole and miconazole should be supplied in a pharmacy under the supervision of a registered pharmacist.

According to the Ordinance, all pharmaceutical products must be registered with the Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Hong Kong before they can

be sold in the market. Illegal sale or possession of unregistered pharmaceutical products or Part 1 poisons is a criminal offence. Upon conviction, the maximum penalty for each offence is a fine of \$100,000 and two years' imprisonment.

The DH strongly urged members of the public not to buy or use products of doubtful composition or from unknown sources. All registered pharmaceutical products should carry a Hong Kong registration number on the package in the format of "HK-XXXXX". The safety, quality and efficacy of unregistered pharmaceutical products are not guaranteed.

People who have purchased the products concerned should stop using them immediately and consult healthcare professionals if in doubt or if they feel unwell after use. They may submit the products to the Drug Office of the DH at Room 1804-06, 18/F, Wing On Kowloon Centre, 345 Nathan Road, Kowloon, during office hours for disposal.

