

HA's response to recall of anti-hypertensive drug by DH

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Following the announcement by the Department of Health (DH) today (July 6) on the recall of an anti-hypertensive drug "Valtensin 80mg tablets and 160mg tablets", the Hospital Authority (HA) spokesperson said all public hospitals have been notified to cease prescribing the drug concerned so to dovetail DH's decision and also for precautionary measure. Arrangement would be made to dispense other anti-hypertensive medications to patients.

The spokesperson pointed out that the anti-hypertensive drug concerned is generally prescribed for patients to treat high blood pressure, and heart failure. According to the assessment of clinical experts, there is no immediate risk to patients for continual intake of the drug. The experts are of the views that there shall be a well balance of possible risk factors between continual intake and abrupt stopping of the said drug. The latter might cause adverse effect on the patient's condition. Hence it is recommended to the out-patients who had been dispensed with the drug not to stop taking.

"There are currently around 30,000 patients in public hospitals being dispensed with the anti-hypertensive drug concerned. Their condition will be reviewed by the attending doctor when they attend their next follow-up consultation at the clinic," the spokesperson added.

The spokesperson said the Authority will continue to closely liaise with the DH in obtaining more information about the investigation on the recalled drug. Patients who have any enquiries related to the recalled anti-hypertensive drug can call the public hospitals as appended below:

Cluster	Institution	Telephone number
	Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital	6460 0553
Hong Kong East	Tung Wah Eastern Hospital	6460 0553
	Ruttonjee Hospital and Tang Shiu Kin Hospital	2291 2079
Hong Kong West	Queen Mary Hospital	2255 6649
Kowloon Central	Queen Elizabeth Hospital	3506 6572
	Kwong Wah Hospital	3517 7112
Kowloon East	United Christian Hospital	3949 4000
	Tseung Kwan O Hospital	2208 0111

	Princess Margaret Hospital	2370 0980
Kowloon West	Caritas Medical Centre	3408 6348
	Yan Chai Hospital	2417 8383
	Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital	2689 2699
New Territories East	North District Hospital	2683 7561
	Prince of Wales Hospital	5569 9855
	Tuen Mun Hospital	2468 6872
New Territories West	Pok Oi Hospital	
	Tin Shui Wai Hospital	
	Castle Peak Hospital	
	Siu Lam Hospital	2401 4592

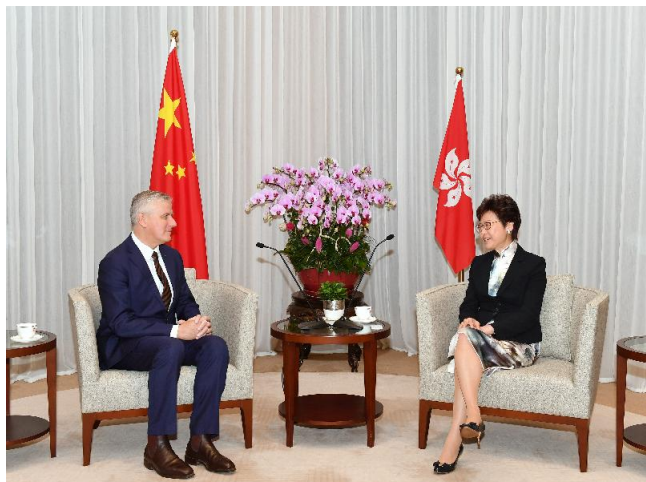
[CE meets Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport of Australia \(with photo\)](#)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, met the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport of Australia, Mr Michael McCormack, at the Chief Executive's Office this morning (July 6).

Mrs Lam welcomed Mr McCormack, who visits Hong Kong to take part in the launching ceremony of a direct flight between Hong Kong and Sydney operated by an Australian airline, signifying the growing relationship between Hong Kong and Australia. The two places have close economic and trade ties, she said, pointing out that Hong Kong is Australia's fifth largest export market for goods, seventh largest trading partner in services and fifth largest source of investment. In addition, more than 600 Australian companies operate in Hong Kong. Noting that she was delighted to learn that the negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement between Hong Kong and Australia have been making good progress, she said she looks forward to the early conclusion of the negotiations and the commencement of discussion on a comprehensive avoidance of double taxation agreement to bring about more business opportunities for enterprises of both places.

Mrs Lam said that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), which has just celebrated the 21st anniversary of its establishment, has successfully implemented "One Country, Two Systems" over the years. The rule of law and judicial independence in the HKSAR are upheld and various rights of the people are fully protected. Pointing out that four of the overseas non-permanent judges of the Court of Final Appeal are from Australia, she said those illustrious judges have made significant contributions to the city's rule of law and reflect its judicial independence.

As Hong Kong and Australia have established sound foundations for co-operation in various aspects, Mrs Lam expressed the hope that the two places would continue to expand co-operation and exchanges in areas including cultural and creative industries as well as innovation and technology.



[Recall of five valsartan-containing pharmaceutical products](#)

The Department of Health (DH) today (July 6) instructed two licensed medicine wholesalers, namely Actavis Hong Kong Limited and Hong Kong Medical Supplies Ltd (HK Medical), to recall five products containing valsartan from the market as a precautionary measure due to an impurity detected in the raw material.

The affected products are:

Product	Hong Kong Registration Number	Registration certificate holder
Valtensin 160mg tablets	HK-61786	Actavis
Valtensin 80mg tablets	HK-61787	Actavis
Valtensin HCT tablets 160/12.5mg	HK-61784	Actavis
Valtensin HCT tablets 80/12.5mg	HK-61785	Actavis
Valsartan Stada 80mg tablets	HK-60794	HK Medical

The DH, through its surveillance system, noted that the raw material valsartan produced by a manufacturer in the Mainland and used in certain pharmaceutical products as an active ingredient was found to contain an impurity, N-nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA). NDMA is classified as a probable human carcinogen (a substance that could cause cancer) based on results from laboratory tests.

So far, the above products registered in Hong Kong are confirmed by the wholesalers to contain the affected raw material. The DH's investigation is continuing.

According to the preliminary investigation of the Mainland manufacturer, the presence of NDMA in the raw material valsartan is believed to be related to its production method.

Valsartan-containing products are prescription medicines used to treat hypertension and heart failure. They are available as single ingredient products or in combination with other active ingredients.

According to Actavis and HK Medical, the above products have been supplied to local private doctors and pharmacies. The products Valtensin 80mg and 160mg tablets have also been supplied to the Hospital Authority.

Both companies have set up hotlines (Actavis: 3188 4288; HK Medical: 2806 3112) to answer related enquiries.

So far, the DH has not received any adverse reactions related to the above affected products.

Patients who are taking the above products should not stop taking the medicines, but should seek advice from their healthcare professionals for appropriate arrangement.

EatSmart Schools promote healthy eating among primary students (with photos)

A total of 105 primary schools have been awarded the highest honour of EatSmart School under the EatSmart School Accreditation Scheme (ESAS) since the scheme was launched by the Department of Health (DH) and the Education Bureau (EDB) in the 2009/10 school year. The Scheme has helped to build a favourable environment for promoting healthy eating at school, as well as encourage and cultivate good eating habits for students.

Addressing the EatSmart School Accreditation Ceremony 2018 and Healthy Eating Forum held today (July 6), the Acting Director of Health, Dr Wong Ka-hing, said that over 260 primary schools, representing about 40 per cent of all primary schools in Hong Kong, had participated in the ESAS since its inception. Among them, 137 had attained accreditation, of which 105 achieved the highest honour of EatSmart School. The school accreditation is valid for three years. This year, 19 schools achieved the EatSmart School accreditation for the third consecutive time, as compared to nine last year, and were presented with the Award for Continuous Promotion of Healthy Eating at School. The result is encouraging.

Dr Wong pointed out that the overweight and obesity rates of primary school students in Hong Kong have continued to drop, from 22.2 per cent in the 2009/10 school year to 17.6 per cent in the 2016/17 school year. However, the obesity rates of secondary school students rose from 18.7 per cent in the 2010/11 school year to 19.9 per cent in the 2016/17 school year.

Dr Wong said, "The problem of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) caused by unhealthy eating, including low intake of fruit and vegetables and consumption of food high in salt, sugar or fat content by students cannot be neglected. To combat the threat of NCDs, the Government this year announced the 'Towards 2025: Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent and Control Non-communicable Diseases in Hong Kong', setting out nine local targets to be achieved by 2025, which include halting the rise in prevalence of raised blood pressure, diabetes and obesity as well as attaining a 30 per cent relative reduction in mean population daily intake of salt/sodium. Successful prevention and control of NCDs relies on collaborative efforts by various important stakeholders including government bureaux and departments, academia, non-governmental organisations, the private sector and individuals." He encouraged all stakeholders to keep on nurturing a nutrition-friendly environment for learning and living for students from a young age.

The ESAS is a key programme under the EatSmart@school.hk campaign launched by the DH. According to the ESAS accreditation criteria, accredited schools have to demonstrate a commitment to continuously implementing administrative measures, providing healthy lunches and snacks in accordance with the nutritional requirements stipulated in the "Nutritional Guidelines on Lunch for Students" and the "Nutritional Guidelines on Snacks for Students" of the DH. They also have to organise educational programmes and publicity events to create a nutrition-friendly school learning environment for students.

Another programme under the campaign is the Joyful Fruit Month event launched in 2007. Dr Wong said that the number of participating kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools and special schools has reached a record high of 1 353, and all of them have been promoting a joyful ambience for students to eat fruit, nurturing a healthy habit of daily fruit eating among students. This year, the Fruit Comic Colouring and Drawing Competition organised by the DH was well received by the education sector,

with over 3 400 submissions from more than 230 primary schools.

Meanwhile, in order to address the problem of excessive sodium in school lunches, the DH rolled out the Salt Reduction Scheme for School Lunches from the 2017/18 school year, under which 13 participating school lunch suppliers have supplied sodium-reduced lunches to more than 450 primary schools in Hong Kong. As of June this year, participating lunch suppliers have developed over 1 000 sodium-reduced lunch options for schools. Dr Wong expressed the hope that the overall sodium level of school lunches could be reduced gradually, helping students to develop healthy eating habits.

Acknowledging the 12th anniversary of the EatSmart@school.hk campaign, Dr Wong said that he was grateful for the support and guidance of the EDB and members of the EatSmart@school.hk Campaign Steering Committee over the years. He also expressed his sincere gratitude for the active participation and support of principals, teachers, parents and students from different schools, as well as the co-operation of lunch suppliers, in helping to nurture a nutrition-friendly environment for learning and living on campus. He appealed to all parties to carry on supporting the campaign and promoting healthy eating.

Also officiating at the ceremony, the Principal Education Officer (Curriculum Development) of the EDB, Mr Cheng Ming-keung, said, "The EDB has always attached great importance to the development of students' physical and mental health. To lead a healthy lifestyle is one of the learning goals of the school curriculum. With respect to the promotion of healthy eating, the EDB has expended much effort in leveraging the school curriculum, school administration and home-school co-operation to guide our students to develop healthy habits, which has helped lay a good foundation for building a healthy lifestyle."

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More information on the ESAS is available at the DH's thematic website (school.eatsmart.gov.hk).





[Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai Swimming Pool temporarily closed](#)

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (July 6) that Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai Swimming Pool in Yuen Long District has been temporarily closed for cleaning and superchlorination following the discovery of a small amount of faeces in the pool.

It will be reopened at 6.30am tomorrow.

The department appeals to swimmers to be considerate and to keep the swimming pools clean. They are advised not to swim after a full meal and should use the toilet facilities if necessary before swimming.