

CHP investigates suspected poisoning case after consumption of medicinal plant

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (July 23) investigating a suspected case of poisoning related to the consumption of soup containing *Radix Fici Simplicissimae*, and appealed to members of the public not to collect, buy or consume medicinal plants of unknown origin.

The case involves a family of three persons, comprising two women aged 74 and 45 as well as a boy aged 12. They consumed self-prepared soup containing *Radix Fici Simplicissimae* at home in the evening of July 19 and developed dizziness, nausea and vomiting one to two hours after consumption. The patients attended the Accident and Emergency Department of United Christian Hospital on the same day and were discharged the following day after management.

Their urine specimens and the soup remnants have been sent for laboratory testing and the results are pending.

Initial investigations revealed that the *Radix Fici Simplicissimae* concerned had been purchased at Shop 70-71 in Tak Tin Market, Lam Tin. The DH and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department have conducted a field investigation at the above premises today. The CHP's investigations are ongoing.

"*Radix Fici Simplicissimae* is not toxic, but resembles some toxic plants such as *Gelsemium elegans* and can be mixed up with these substances," a spokesman for the CHP explained.

"Members of the public should not collect from the wild, buy or consume medicinal plants of unknown origin. If they have purchased *Radix Fici Simplicissimae* at the above premises, as a precautionary measure, they should stop consuming it or seek advice from healthcare professionals before consumption. If they feel unwell after consumption, they should seek advice from healthcare professionals immediately," the spokesman advised.