

[DH investigates case of undeclared Western drug ingredients detected in cream product prescribed by listed Chinese medicine practitioner \(with photo\)](#)

The Department of Health (DH) today (July 27) urged members of the public who consulted a listed Chinese medicine practitioner (CMP), Au Yeung Wai-chi, practising at Room 1, 18/F, Wealthy Plaza, 138 Shau Kei Wan Road, Sai Wan Ho, to stop using a green cream product (see photo) he prescribed as it was found to contain undeclared Western drug ingredients.

The Hospital Authority recently reported a suspected poisoning case involving a 25-year-old man who has consulted the above CMP for eczema since May last year for over ten times. He was prescribed with one to two cans of the cream product each time for application on skin parts with eczema. He attended Queen Elizabeth Hospital on July 7 due to worsening of eczema conditions and cellulitis on his legs and has been discharged. Acting upon the report, the DH raided the above CMP's premises and seized the green cream product for testing. The DH received test results from the Government Laboratory today confirming that the sample of the cream product was found to contain undeclared Western drug ingredients, namely dexamethasone acetate, ketoconazole and lincomycin. A man aged 77 was arrested by the Police today for suspected illegal possession of Part 1 poisons, unregistered pharmaceutical products and antibiotics. Investigations are ongoing.

Dexamethasone acetate, a corticosteroid, is a Part 1 poison and prescription medicine for treating inflammation. Inappropriate use of a corticosteroid may cause serious side effects such as Cushing's syndrome, with symptoms including moon face and muscle atrophy. Ketoconazole, also a Part 1 poison, is an antifungal drug commonly used for the treatment of fungal skin infections. Lincomycin is an antibiotic used for the treatment of various bacterial infections. Ketoconazole and lincomycin may cause side effects such as itching, irritation and an allergic reaction when used topically.

The DH will set up a hotline (2961 8949) which operates from 9am to 5pm from tomorrow (July 28) for public enquiries related to using the cream product prescribed by the above CMP. Members of the public who have been prescribed with the cream product by the above CMP who feel unwell or are in doubt should consult healthcare professionals as soon as possible.

According to the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Cap. 138), illegal possession of Part 1 poison and unregistered pharmaceutical product are criminal offences. The maximum penalty for each offence is a fine of \$100,000

and two years' imprisonment. In addition, the Antibiotics Ordinance (Cap. 137) also prohibits illegal possession of antibiotics. Offender is liable to a maximum penalty of a \$50,000 fine and one year's imprisonment. Upon completion of the investigations, the DH will consult the Department of Justice on prosecution matters. The DH has already referred the case to the Chinese Medicine Council of Hong Kong for consideration of possible disciplinary action.

Members of the public may submit the above cream product to the DH's Chinese Medicine Regulatory Office at 16/F, AIA Kowloon Tower, Landmark East, 100 How Ming Street, Kwun Tong, during office hours for disposal.

