

# DH investigates case of undeclared Western drug ingredients detected in cream products prescribed by registered Chinese medicine practitioner

The Department of Health (DH) today (August 7) urged members of the public who consulted a registered Chinese medicine practitioner (CMP), Ms Ng Hoi-yan, practising at Room 1103, Sunbeam Commercial Building, 469-471 Nathan Road, Kowloon, to take note of seven cream products the practitioner prescribed as they were found to contain undeclared Western drug ingredients.

Acting upon intelligence, the DH raided the above CMP's premises and seized a quantity of cream products for analysis recently. Test results from the Government Laboratory today confirmed that seven samples of the cream products seized at the above CMP's premises were found to contain a number of Part 1 poisons, namely clobetasol propionate, beclomethasone dipropionate and miconazole (please refer to the annex for details of the results and photos). An investigation is ongoing.

Clobetasol propionate and beclomethasone dipropionate are corticosteroid and prescription medicine for treating inflammation. Inappropriate use of corticosteroids may cause serious side effects such as Cushing's syndrome, with symptoms including moon face and muscle atrophy. Miconazole is an antifungal drug commonly used for the treatment of fungal skin infections. It can cause side effects such as itching, irritation and an allergic reaction when used topically.

The DH will set up a hotline (2961 8949) for public enquiries related to the cream products prescribed by the above CMP. The hotline will operate from 9am to 5pm from Mondays to Fridays (except public holidays) starting on August 10.

According to the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Cap 138), illegal possession of Part 1 poisons and unregistered pharmaceutical products are criminal offences. The maximum penalty for each offence is a fine of \$100,000 and two years' imprisonment. Upon completion of the investigation, the DH will consult the Department of Justice on prosecution matters. The DH will refer the case to the Chinese Medicine Council of Hong Kong for consideration of possible disciplinary action.

Members of the public who have been prescribed with medicines by the above CMP who feel unwell or are in doubt should consult health-care professionals as soon as possible. They may submit the medicines to the DH's Chinese Medicine Regulatory Office at 16/F, AIA Kowloon Tower, Landmark East,

100 How Ming Street, Kwun Tong, Kowloon, during office hours for disposal.