

Public urged not to buy or consume oral product "Hemohim" containing undeclared controlled substance (with photos)

The Department of Health (DH) today (November 2) appealed to the public not to buy or consume an oral product named "Hemohim" as it was found to contain an undeclared controlled substance.

Following up on the DH's announcement yesterday (November 1) on the investigation of suspected poisoning cases related to the consumption of the above product, it was found that the products were distributed by Atomy Asia Pacific Limited (Atomy). A sample of the above product was obtained from a premises of Atomy at Cheung Sha Wan for analysis and test result from the Government Laboratory was received today, which revealed that the sample of "Hemohim" contained methoxsalen.

According to information provided by Atomy, the above product was manufactured in Korea and imported for local distribution through its company website. Atomy has set up a hotline (3611 7706) to answer related enquiries.

Methoxsalen is a Part 1 poisons and prescription medicine under the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Cap 138). It can only be sold at pharmacies under the supervision of a registered pharmacist and upon doctor's prescription. Methoxsalen can be used to treat diseases such as psoriasis and vitiligo. Common adverse effects include nausea, headache, dizziness, fatigue, depression and skin reaction to sunlight.

According to the Ordinance, illegal sale or possession of Part 1 poisons is a criminal offence. The maximum penalty for the offence is a fine of \$100,000 and two years' imprisonment. The DH's investigation is continuing and will take enforcement action when necessary. Upon completion of its investigations, the DH will seek advice from the Department of Justice on prosecution matters.

The DH spokesman strongly urged members of the public not to buy products of unknown or doubtful composition, or to consume products from unknown sources. Members of the public who have purchased the above product should stop consuming it immediately. They should consult healthcare professionals for advice if feeling unwell after consumption.

The public may submit the product to the Drug Office of the DH at Room 1801, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, during office hours for disposal.

