

Public urged not to buy or consume slimming product with undeclared Western drug ingredients (with photos)

The Department of Health (DH) today (February 27) appealed to the public not to buy or consume a slimming product named Vy & Tea as it was found to contain undeclared and banned drug ingredients that might be dangerous to health.

Acting upon intelligence, a sample of the above product was purchased via an Internet platform for analysis. Test results from the Government Laboratory revealed that the sample contained the banned drug ingredients sibutramine and phenolphthalein. The DH's investigation is continuing.

Sibutramine was once used as an appetite suppressant. Since November 2010, pharmaceutical products containing sibutramine have been banned in Hong Kong because of increased cardiovascular risk. Phenolphthalein was once used to treat constipation, but has been banned in Hong Kong for its cancer-causing effect.

According to the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Cap. 138), all pharmaceutical products must be registered with the Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Hong Kong before they can be legally sold in the market. Illegal sale or possession of unregistered pharmaceutical products or Part 1 poisons are criminal offences. The maximum penalty for each offence is a fine of \$100,000 and two years' imprisonment.

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. Weight control should be achieved through a balanced diet and appropriate exercise. The public should consult healthcare professionals before using any medication for weight control. The public may visit the website of the Drug Office of the DH for "[Health messages on overweight problem and slimming products](#)" and "[Information on slimming products with undeclared Western drug ingredients](#)".

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. They 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.

