

Public urged not to buy or consume unlabelled slimming products with controlled ingredients (with photos)

The Department of Health (DH) today (October 30) appealed to the public not to buy or consume unlabelled slimming products that may contain controlled medicine ingredients.

Acting upon a public complaint, a local Internet seller was found offering for sale various unlabelled slimming products claiming to be obtained from overseas. Samples of the products were purchased via a social media platform for analysis. Test results from the Government Laboratory revealed that five products contained Part 1 poisons including hydrochlorothiazide, propranolol and fluoxetine.

The DH's investigation is continuing.

Hydrochlorothiazide and propranolol are used for the treatment of hypertension. Side effects of hydrochlorothiazine include low blood pressure and electrolytes imbalance, while those of propranolol include abdominal discomfort, confusion, depression and dizziness. Fluoxetine is used for treatment of mood disorders and may cause hallucinations and insomnia.

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 and 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.

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 spokesman added that 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. They 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](#)" for more information.

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.

