

Singapore: HSA Alert: Three health products detected with potent undeclared ingredients (Dexamethasone, Sibutramine and Mycophenolic acid); One of which led to hospitalisation of a consumer

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is alerting members of the public not to consume the following three health products:

- (a) 'Pil Raja Urat Asli'
- (b) 'XXS xtraxtrasmall'
- (c) 'Best Nutrition Products Diabotica 500mg Capsules'

HSA has tested the products and found that they contain the following undeclared potent western medicinal ingredients, including a steroid and a banned substance for weight loss:

Name of product	Undeclared potent ingredients
Pil Raja Urat Asli	Dexamethasone
XXS xtraxtrasmall	Sibutramine
Best Nutrition Products Diabotica 500mg Capsules	Mycophenolic acid

An elderly male who consumed 'Pil Raja Urat Asli' was hospitalised due to the development of Cushing's syndrome.

The products were detected through HSA's post-market product quality surveillance and adverse event monitoring programme. 'Pil Raja, Urat Asli' was sold by street peddlers in Geylang and Chinatown, 'XXS xtraxtrasmall' was sold online, and 'Best Nutrition Products Diabotica 500mg Capsules' was sold at local retail outlets. HSA has initiated the recall of the affected products from the retail outlets, and has directed the administrators of online platforms to remove web listings of the affected products.

Dexamethasone is a steroid and is usually prescribed for inflammatory conditions and should only be used under strict medical supervision. Long-term unsupervised use of oral steroids can cause increased blood glucose levels (which may lead to diabetes), as well as high blood pressure, cataracts, muscular and bone disorders, an increased risk of infections, and Cushing's syndrome.

Sibutramine was a prescription-only-medicine for weight loss but has been withdrawn in Singapore since 2010 because of an increased risk of heart attacks and strokes. In recent years, HSA has detected several slimming products adulterated with sibutramine. These have caused serious adverse effects in consumers, including palpitations, hallucinations or hearing voices.

Mycophenolic acid is used to suppress immunity in auto-immune diseases and prevent rejection in organ transplantation. Gastrointestinal side effects such as abdominal pain, constipation, diarrhoea

and infections have been reported with the use of mycophenolic acid.

Consumers are advised to stop taking 'XXS xtraxtrasmall' and 'Best Nutrition Products Diabotica 500mg Capsules' immediately and consult a doctor if they feel unwell or are concerned about their health. As 'Pil Raja Urat Asli' contains a potent steroid, consumers who have taken this product should see a doctor as soon as possible. Discontinuation of steroids without proper medical supervision can cause serious withdrawal symptoms such as fatigue, confusion and low blood pressure, especially when the product has been taken for more than a few weeks.

Please refer to the following website in HSA for details:

https://www.hsa.gov.sg/content/hsa/en/News_Events/Press_Releases/2018/pilrajaurasli.html

In Hong Kong, the above products are not registered pharmaceutical products. Related news on 'Pil Raja Urat Asli' has been previously issued by Singapore Health Sciences Authority (HSA) and Health Canada, and was posted on the Drug Office website on 2 August 2014 and 31 December 2014 respectively.

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