



## **HSA ALERTS PUBLIC TO TWO ILLEGAL SKIN WHITENING PRODUCTS**

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is alerting members of the public to two cosmetic products found to contain mercury, which is prohibited in such products:

- i. Melati UV- Whitening Vit. E Cream
- ii. ESTHER Bleaching Cream (A) and (B)

2 These products were both sold in retail outlets in Singapore as well as on online platforms. Members of the public are advised to stop using and discard the affected products as they may cause harmful effects.

### **More about the Products**

3 As part of HSA's post-market surveillance activities, two cosmetic products "Melati UV- Whitening Vit. E Cream" and "ESTHER" Bleaching Cream (A) and (B)", were sampled and detected to contain mercury. The former claimed to have effective whitening effects following just one application while the latter to whiten the skin and treat pimples.

4 Both products did not list their ingredients on the packaging or the accompanying product leaflet. The products were available on online platforms and in retail shops. HSA has since seized the stock of both products from the wholesalers and their retailers.

### **Safety Concerns with Mercury**

5 The use of mercury in cosmetic products is prohibited under the Health Products (Cosmetic Products – ASEAN Cosmetic Directive) Regulations. Mercury in skin lightening products may cause rashes, skin irritation and blotchiness of the skin. Chronic exposure to high levels of mercury may affect the kidneys and nervous system as it can be absorbed from the skin.

### **HSA Advisory**

6 Cosmetic products which contain potent or prohibited ingredients can cause allergic reactions such rash, itchiness and redness, especially in consumers with sensitive skin. Long term use of these products can cause other more serious health effects. Consumers who bought these two illegal cosmetic products are advised to stop using them immediately and discard them. In addition, HSA reminds consumers to:

- Stop using these products immediately and discard the products;
- Exercise discretion when buying cosmetic products, especially those with exaggerated claims or which offer "quick-fix";
- Be wary of cosmetic products without proper label or ingredient listing; and
- Contact HSA's Enforcement Branch at Tel: 6866-3485 during office hours (Monday to Friday) or email: [hsa\\_is@hsa.gov.sg](mailto:hsa_is@hsa.gov.sg) if they have information on the sale of these two products or any illegal health products.

7 HSA warns sellers to stop the sales and distribution of these illegal products. Anyone found convicted of selling such products, will face a penalty fine of up to \$100,000 and/or imprisonment for a period of up to three years under the Health Products Act. Sellers should be cautious when sourcing for health products (including cosmetics) to sell and are reminded of their responsibility in ensuring the safety of the products and adherence to local legislations prior to putting them in the market, including selling them online.

**HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY  
SINGAPORE  
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▪ **About the Health Sciences Authority (HSA)**

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) applies medical, pharmaceutical and scientific expertise through its three professional groups, Health Products Regulation, Blood Services and Applied Sciences, to protect and advance national health and safety. HSA is a multidisciplinary authority. It serves as the national regulator for health products, ensuring they are wisely regulated to meet standards of safety, quality and efficacy. As the national blood service, it is responsible for providing a safe and adequate blood supply. It also applies specialised scientific, forensic, investigative and analytical capabilities in serving the administration of justice. For more details, visit <http://www.hsa.gov.sg/>.

For more updates on public health and safety matters, follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/HSAsg](http://www.twitter.com/HSAsg).

▪ **About HSA's Health Products Regulation Group**

The Health Products Regulation Group (HPRG) of HSA ensures that drugs, innovative therapeutics, medical devices and health-related products are wisely regulated and meet appropriate safety, quality and efficacy standards. It contributes to the development of biomedical sciences in Singapore by administering a robust, scientific and responsive regulatory framework.

## HSA ALERTS PUBLIC TO 2 ILLEGAL SKIN WHITENING PRODUCTS

## 1. “Melati UV-Whitening Vit. E Cream” with its accompanying product leaflet in Malay



## 2. “ESTHER Bleaching Cream (A) and (B)” with its accompanying product leaflet in Malay

