

Alert on overdosage of Radix Aconiti Lateralis

The Department of Health (DH) has recently received notification of a case of aconitum alkaloid poisoning relating to consumption of a Chinese herb, processed Radix Aconiti Lateralis. The patient self-prescribed and purchased the herb in the Mainland without consulting any Chinese medicine practitioner (CMP). The patient's condition was stable after receiving treatment in a hospital. The likely contributing factor for this event is overdose of processed Radix Aconiti Lateralis.

Radix Aconiti Lateralis is a Chinese herb containing aconitum alkaloids and is indicated for pain relief. Prolonged decoction to reduce its toxicity is required before it can be safely consumed orally. Its overdose can cause perioral and limb numbness, dizziness, nausea, diarrhea, weak pulses and shortness of breath. In severe cases, it may be fatal.

Members of the public are advised against self-prescription but to consult CMP regarding consumption of Chinese herbs. Besides, people should purchase Chinese medicines from credible sources.

Please refer to this link for the list of licensed Chinese medicines traders:

http://www.cmchk.org.hk/pcm/eng/idx_list.htm

Chinese Medicine Division,

Department of Health

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