Valvular Heart Disease Caused By Chinese Proprietary Slimming Medicine Adulterated With Fenfluramine

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Abstract

Anorectic drugs containing fenfluramine and dexfenfluramine have been classified as 'off-label' drugs in Hong Kong for several years. In this study, we report a case of valvular heart disease found in a teenager who had been taking Chinese proprietary medicine as a weight reducing agent for six months. Fenfluramine was identified in the diet pills. Two other herbal proprietary slimming products adulterated with fenfluramine and affecting several hundred people were subsequently discovered. (HK J Paediatr (new series) 2005;10:55-58)

Key words: Appetite depressants; Chinese medicine; Fenfluramine; Heart valve diseases