



二〇〇八年十月十六日

魚油補充劑奧米加 3 含量與聲稱有差異

魚油有益健康。但進食該類補充劑時可否得到標籤所示的奧米加 3 含量？

消費者委員會發現，部分產品聲稱的兩種奧米加 3 脂肪酸 DHA 和 EPA 這的含量，與測試所得有頗大差異。

測試樣本包括 21 款魚油和 7 款魚肝油產品，檢視其脂肪酸含量（與及魚肝油產品的維他命 A 和 D 含量），和進行污染物測試。

DHA 和 EPA 都已證實對健康有益，故此魚油產品大多顯著地標示含有奧美加 3。

28 款樣本中，有 23 個列出聲稱的 DHA 和 EPA 含量。

但測試發現數個樣本的 DHA 和 EPA 的實際含量遠低於其聲稱。

最明顯的例子是一款魚肝油補充劑，檢出的 EPA 含量較聲稱的低約 88%。

該產品標示的 EPA 含量為每粒 240 毫克，但測試顯示只有 29.6 毫克。

另一產品的 DHA 檢出的含量為每粒 26 毫克，比聲稱的 90 毫克少達 71%。

消委會已將與聲稱含量有差異的測試結果交予當局跟進。

部分樣本含反式脂肪（最高含量的為每粒 40.6 毫克），與及飽和脂肪（最高含量每粒 372 毫克）。

若按產品標籤建議的補充劑最大服用量，與及試驗結果所得的反式脂肪含量來計算，每天攝入的反式脂肪達 162 毫克，或 WHO/FAO 建議的 7.4%。

飽和脂肪方面，以同樣方法計算，每天的攝入量達 1,488 毫克，佔 WHO/FAO 建議的 6.7%。

至於測試魚肝油產品的維他命 A 及 D 含量，結果都與聲稱接近，只有一款樣本的維他命 D 低於聲稱的 37%。

污染物測試中，重金屬、農藥和工業污染物 PCB 的結果都令人滿意。

新鮮度測試發現樣本在不同程度上出現分解和氧化，但整體來說品質可以接受。

消委會在報告中亦徵詢醫學專家有關魚油和魚肝油補充劑的健康聲稱。

他們全都同意食用魚和魚油，可以減輕心臟有關的問題。

科學研究亦證實，進食奧米加 3 可降低血壓、降低三酸甘油脂，有助預防心臟疾病。

但專家警告，攝入過量奧米加 3 可導致腸胃不適和增加出血風險。建議每日最高服用總量是 3 克 DHA 和 EPA。

此外，過量服用維他命 A 和 D 可導致肝中毒。一般成年人的維他命 A 和 D 的每天攝入量上限分別是 10,000 IU 和 2,000 IU。兒童、孕婦及授乳婦女的限量應較低。

孕婦和授乳婦女若已有醫護人員處方多種維他命丸，則不需要再進食含豐富維他命 A 和 D 的魚肝油產品。

衛生署建議可從均衡飲食中吸收足夠 DHA 和 EPA。消費者，特別是兒童、孕婦、長期病患者和定期服用心臟科藥物的人士，在服用補充劑前應諮詢專業醫護人員意見。過量服食可引致中毒或影響健康。

避免食用高糖高鹽及高脂兒童穀類早餐

家長應為子女選擇低糖穀類早餐。

鑑於最新國際研究穀類早餐的結果，消費者委員會關注本港有售的 15 款樣本的總糖含量。

除了一款外，其餘的總糖含量都屬偏高，這是根據英國食物標準局所訂的《包裝前方交通燈指示牌標籤技術指引》。

該 14 個樣本的總糖含量由每 100 克 14.8 克至 44 克。根據上述指引，總糖量達每 100 克含 12.5 克或以上的屬於「高」。

測試由國際消費者研究及試驗組織（ICRT）統籌，以支持國際消費者聯會有關禁止向兒童推銷不健康食物和飲品的呼籲。

研究集中於以 12 歲以下兒童為銷售對象的穀類早餐。

在樣本檢測到的糖分主要為蔗糖（穀類天然只含少量蔗糖），相信很大機會是來自生產過程中製造商加入的「游離糖」。

游離糖只提供相當熱量，並無特定營養素，因此攝取量太高的話會導致兒童不健康增磅。

糖分屬於可接受的一款樣本，總糖含量為每 **100 克 11.3 克**。

但該款樣本的鹽（鈉）含量卻最高，達到每 **100 克 971 毫克**，屬樣本中最高。

為健康着想，家長亦應留意兒童穀類早餐的鹽含量。

大部分樣本（**10 款**）的鈉含量介乎每 **100 克 149 毫克**至 **571 毫克**。

脂肪含量方面，大部分在低水平。以每 **100 克**食物計，樣本的總脂肪含量介乎 **0.58 克**至 **7.56 克**，飽和脂肪由 **0.17 克**至 **4.21 克**。所有樣本檢出的反式脂肪均少於每 **100 克 0.1 克**，含量偏低。

另外，**ICRT** 還研究了來自 5 個地區（歐洲、亞太、北美洲、南美洲和非洲）的 **32** 個城市普遍有售的兩個品牌的 **13 款**產品的樣本，比較它們在各地區的平均總糖、總脂肪和鈉含量。

結果發現南美洲的樣本平均總糖含量最高（每 **100 克 38 克**），其次是北美洲（每 **100 克 37 克**）、亞太（每 **100 克 35 克**）、歐洲（每 **100 克 33 克**）和非洲（每 **100 克 27 克**）。

至於各地區樣本的平均鈉含量，以北美洲最高（每 **100 克 0.6 毫克**），其餘依次序為亞太和非洲（每 **100 克 0.5 毫克**）、歐洲和南美洲（每 **100 克 0.4 毫克**）。

總脂肪含量方面，歐洲的最高，平均為每 **100 克 3.1 克**，之後是南美洲（每 **100 克 2.8 克**）、亞太和北美洲（每 **100 克 1.8 克**）和非洲（每 **100 克 1.4 克**）。

消費者可參考今期（**10 月份**）《選擇》月刊，了解 **15 款**本地兒童穀類早餐的評分。評分比重為：總脂肪（**15%**）、飽和脂肪（**15%**）、總糖（**35%**）、鈉（**20%**）和膳食纖維（**15%**）。得分越高者為佳。

與此同時，國際消費者聯會（一個全球消費者聯盟組織）根據 **32** 個城市的研究結果，將於本月底發表報告，題為「穀類早餐的問題：喚醒關注向兒童行銷不健康食品」。

報告將揭露很多受兒童歡迎的穀類早餐所含的糖和鹽含量，達到「驚人水平」，與及食品商向兒童和家長推銷的手法。

國際消聯呼籲制定國際守則，限制向兒童推銷不健康食品。該組織指出，這是唯一的有效方法，確保所有兒童都得到足夠保護，避免成為高脂、高糖和高鹽食品的推銷對象。

測試電熱水爐安全及效能

天氣轉涼，一部安全好用的電熱水爐，是不少家庭不可或缺的。

市場上電熱水爐款式型號繁多，如何選購到價錢合理、表現優勝、安全易用的，並非易事。

消費者委員會與機電工程署合作測試 12 款家用儲水式電熱水爐，包括 6 款無排氣管式和 6 款花灑式。

無排氣管式又稱中央系統式，可接駁至多個出水位。花灑式又稱開放式，只可接駁一個沒有加設開關掣的花灑。

測試評分標準為：效能表現（60%，包括備用耗電量、預熱時間、平均熱水輸出溫度、可持續供應熱水時間）、安全程度（30%）和使用方便程度（10%）。

在 5 級評分中，兩個無排氣管式得 4.5 分，4 個得 4 分。花灑式兩個得 4.5 分，兩個得 4 分，餘下兩個只得 3.5 分。

產品安全方面，測試結果顯示所有 12 個樣本都達國際標準 IEC60335-2-21 的主要要求。

其中 6 個無排氣管式在安全評分中得滿分，但花灑式則只有兩個在安全方面得滿分。

3 個花灑式樣本的安全評分稍低於滿分，為 4.5 分。主要是在模擬非正常操作時供水暫停加上恆溫器失靈，令熱水爐溫度不斷上升，樣本因高溫導致發熱管損壞。

餘下的一款花灑式在安全程度方面只得 3.5 分，是由於內部部分電線沒有適當固定，導致電線的絕緣體與內部原件位置的爬電距離及電氣間隙低於標準要求。而該樣本的塑膠外殼阻燃能力亦不足。

去年 10 月，本港一住宅單位的花灑式電熱水爐爆炸。報道指懷疑意外原因是恆溫器有故障，事實上亦與出水喉加裝了開關水掣有關。

消費者應留意，花灑式電熱水爐的出水喉管必須保持暢通無阻。切勿在出水喉管位置加裝任何開關水掣，或接駁至洗手盆或浴缸，避免水掣關上時，儲水箱因壓力過大而爆炸。

效能表現測試顯示，樣本的能源效益有很大差異。能源效益越高則越少電量用於備用狀態，不但較節省電費支出，亦有助環保。

根據機電署能源效益標籤計劃的準則，3 個樣本達到最高的 1 級效率，3 個樣本只及 5 級效率。

測試亦比較樣本的平均熱水輸出溫度，樣本的恆溫器設定在 65°C，加熱完畢後即

關上電源。無排氣管式樣本中，平均熱水輸出溫度介乎 40°C 至 58°C，花灑式的介乎 46°C 至 63°C。

可持續供應熱水時間（將恆溫設定在最高水溫，然後控制出水溫度維持在 50°C 和流量為每分鐘 5 升，持續運作至水溫下跌至 40°C）。無排氣管式樣本介乎 8.6 至 17.3 分鐘，花灑式由 5.1 至 13.6 分鐘。

其他安全使用要點包括：

- l 電熱水爐的安裝或改裝工程，必須由註冊電業承辦商及持牌水喉匠進行。
- l 若有異常，應立即關掉電源及安排有經驗技工維修。
- l 使用完電熱水爐後，應將電源關掉。定期安排有經驗的技師檢查、保養及維修。

小心購買冬蟲夏草

留心市面上不同種類的蟲草產品。

由於蟲草產品具藥療功效，需求和售價都一直上升。

但事實上，蟲草產品種類繁多，消費者委員會建議消費者購買前應先決定他們要買那些品種。

售價最高的蟲草產品應為「冬蟲夏草」這種珍貴的中藥材。

根據《中國藥典》和本港的《中醫藥條例》附表二，冬蟲夏草為麥角菌科蟲草屬藥材（即 *Cordyceps sinensis*）。

故此如果你準備選購的是「冬蟲夏草」，必須向店員清楚表明要購買「冬蟲夏草」，而不要只說「蟲草」。

冬蟲夏草每兩售價可高達數千元，其他種類的蟲草則便宜得多。

消委會建議中藥材業界，清楚標示產品的種類，避免令消費者混淆，而消費者則應該光顧領有牌照的中藥材零售商。

由於現時中成藥註冊的申請仍在處理中，因此，在香港售賣的蟲草產品，可能仍繼續使用其原有「冬蟲夏草」字眼的名稱。但原則是產品名稱不應帶有誤導成分。

消委會建議消費者選購蟲草製成的健康產品時，應細看成分表的內容，以確定該產品是否確實含有「冬蟲夏草」。

如產品不含冬蟲夏草，則不能在成分表上標示冬蟲夏草。

通脹及經濟危機下節省家用開支方法

通脹持續，加上環球金融震盪，大家要準備面對困難時刻。

消費者委員會提出超過 120 項簡單可行的建議予消費者，於日常生活中減省家庭支出。

在過程中亦能為環保出一分力，建立可持續發展的生活方式，以下是部分重點。

購買家居電器例如冷氣機、洗衣機和雪櫃時，選擇附有機電工程署一級能源效益標籤的產品。

將鎢絲燈泡轉用慳電膽，可減省電力支出達 8 成。沒有需要時應把照明關掉。

用遙控器關電視機只可將電視機切換至備用狀態，不能真正關機。應使用電視機上的總開關掣，更好的做法是關上供應電源的插座或拖板上的開關掣。

用作接收數碼電視廣播的機頂盒亦一樣，關上電視機時，也要截斷機頂盒的電源。

電腦長期啟動的耗電量很大，應妥善設置電腦的電源管理，閒置時自動關閉顯示器及硬碟，甚至自動進入系統休眠狀態。

如果只用手機作通話或收發短訊，簡約的款式已勝任有餘，很多手機功能都是甚少使用。

有關食物的基本原則是切勿浪費，購買新鮮食品或出外用膳時，只購買和點所需的分量，吃不完打包回家。

選擇較便宜而營養價值接近的食物。例如合時令的食物一般較便宜，有機食物普遍較貴，但營養價值理論上與非有機的沒有分別。

使用較節能的烹調方法，例如蒸、灼、代替煎和炆等。利用不同煮食鍋或爐具，例如微波爐、電磁爐、壓力煲和真空煲，節省燃料和時間。

節省開支不等如購買劣質食物或漠視食物衛生。

光顧衛生和信譽良好的商舖，不要買過期食品。

處理食物時，以不同用具分開處理生熟食物。廚房用具和食具應清洗和保持清潔。

確保食物徹底煮熟。蓋好剩餘的食物，在雪櫃存放不應超過三天。進食剩餘的食物前應徹底翻熱，且不應翻熱超過一次。

用花灑淋浴可節省能源及用水。在夏天或炎熱日子，以凍水或微暖水淋浴。洗澡水

可收集起來用作沖廁。

購買護膚品和化妝品前，先羅列購物清單，預計所需產品的種類、使用量、適用膚質或氣候。

留意產品標示的生產日期、存放期和開封後的保質期，在產品上貼上標籤，標示購買日期及開封日期，提醒自己要及時使用。

選購衣服時，不要一時興起立即購買。花一點時間整理衣櫃，才決定是否需要添置衣物，並列出清單。

潮流衣飾只能穿着一季，可乘減價時購買款式簡單、質料佳、顏色容易配搭的衣服。

小心保養衣物，令它們更耐穿。按衣物的質料、骯髒程度分開清洗，遵照衣物標籤的建議洗濯方法。衣物必須完全乾透才收藏，在衣櫃和抽屜擺放吸濕劑。可將不再穿着的舊衣物送給慈善機構或放進回收箱。

《選擇》月刊現已上網，網址為 <http://choice.yp.com.hk>，同時可透過電訊盈科固網及流動電話服務接收。

今日（十月十六日）《選擇》月刊記者招待會主持為消委會宣傳及社區關係小組主席何沛謙先生。

歡迎被邀出席新聞發布會的傳媒引用新聞稿的內容。

消費者委員會保留所有關於《選擇》月刊及網上《選擇》的權利（包括版權）。

**Discrepancy in Omega-3 levels
found in fish oil dietary supplements**

Omega-3 fish oils are beneficial for health. But are you getting the levels of Omega-3 stated on the label of these dietary supplements?

The Consumer Council has uncovered, in a test, discrepancy between the claimed and actual contents of the Omega-3 fats docosahexanoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentanoic acid (EPA).

The test analysed 28 fish oil (21) and fish liver oil (7) products for their contents of fatty acids (and vitamins A and D in liver products), as well as of possible contaminants.

Because of the proven health benefit of DHA and EPA, fish oil products often label their Omega-3 content in great prominence.

Except for 5 liver oil supplements, all samples (23) were duly labelled with claims on the levels of DHA and EPA in the products.

The test found that a number of samples, however, contained an amount of DHA and EPA significantly lower than their claims.

In the case of the most notable case, a fish liver oil supplement was revealed to be as much as 88% short of the level of EPA it claimed.

The EPA test result on the product indicated an amount of 29.6mg per capsule compared with 240mg each stated on its label.

In another sample, the DHA result of 26mg per capsule fell also a high 71% short of the claimed value of 90mg each.

The Council has referred its test findings on such label discrepancies to the authorities concerned for follow-up action.

In some samples were found also trans fat (the sample with the highest amount had 40.6mg per capsule), and saturated fat (the highest amount was 372mg per capsule).

Taking into account both the test result (of the highest amount reached) and the maximum recommended dosage, one could take in at a maximum an amount of 162mg trans fat daily, or 7.4% of the limit recommended by WHO/FAO.

In the case of saturated fat, using the same calculation, one may consume a maximum amount of 1,488mg saturated fat daily, or 6.7% of the recommended WHO/FAO limit.

Further, the fish liver oil samples were analysed for contents of vitamins A and D. The results closely followed the claims on the label except for one sample which was found to contain an amount of vitamin D 37% lower than its claim.

On the test to identify the presence of contaminants such as heavy metals, pesticides and industrial wastes polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB), the results were generally satisfactory, especially in pollutants.

The samples were also assessed for their "freshness". While the test indicated variations in the peroxidation and decomposition process of the products, by and large, their quality was deemed acceptable.

As part of the study, the Consumer Council has sought the comments of medical professionals on the health claims of fish oil and fish liver oil dietary supplements.

In their opinion, the experts all agree that the consumption of fish and fish oil could alleviate one's cardiovascular problems.

Scientific evidence has shown that intake of Omega-3 fatty acids could lower blood pressure, reduce blood triglyceride levels and assist in preventing cardiovascular diseases.

However, the experts warn that excessive intake of Omega-3 could lead to gastrointestinal problems and higher risk of bleeding. The daily intake limit is 3g in total of DHA and EPA.

Further, excessive intake of vitamins A and D could also lead to liver problem. The daily limit of vitamins A and D are respectively 10,000 IU and 2000 IU. The limits for children, pregnant and lactating women should be lower.

Pregnant and lactating women are reminded that if their physicians have already prescribed some multi-vitamins for them, it is not necessary to consume vitamin A and D rich fish liver oil products.

The Department of Health advises that one could absorb enough DHA and EPA from a balanced diet. Consumers, in particular children, pregnant women, patients of chronic diseases and people who are on cardiac drugs, should consult medical professionals before taking any health supplements. Excessive intake may lead to intoxication or health damage.

Avoid children's breakfast cereals high in sugar, salt and fat

Parents are urged to choose children's breakfast cereals with low levels of sugar.

In the light of an international joint test on breakfast cereals, the Consumer Council is concerned over the results on the sugar content of 15 samples available in the Hong Kong market.

All but one sample were deemed "high" in sugar by established guidelines (UK Food Standards Agency's Front-of-Pack Traffic Light Signpost Labelling – Technical Guidance).

The 14 samples were found to contain from 14.8g to 44g sugar per 100g of cereal. The UK guidelines set the threshold for "high" sugar at 12.5g/100g and above.

The test is a joint study organized by the International Consumer Research and Testing (ICRT) to support the Consumers International (CI) call to ban the marketing of unhealthy food and drink to children.

It focused on breakfast cereals targeted for children under 12 years of age.

As the sugar detected in the samples was largely sucrose (which exists naturally in cereals only in trace amount), the high sugar content is believed to have been caused mostly from "free sugars" added by the manufacturers in the production process.

High intake of free sugars threatens the nutrient quality of diets by providing significant energy but without specific nutrients, thus unhealthy weight gain in children.

The one sample with a sugar content deemed acceptable contained 11.3g/100g.

Unfortunately, what less sugar it had was more than made up by its content in salt (sodium). Indeed, it had the highest level of sodium of all samples – 971mg/100g of cereal.

For health reasons, parents should also pay heed to the salt content of children's breakfast cereals.

The sodium content of most of the samples (10) in the test were found to be between 149mg/100g and 571mg/100g.

For fat content, the samples were found to fare well with only low levels in the majority of cases ranging from 0.58g to 7.56g in total fat and 0.17g to 4.21g in saturated fat per 100g cereal respectively. All had lower than 0.1g/100g trans fat.

The ICRT study also compared samples of 13 major products of two major brands drawn from 32 cities in 5 regions – Europe, Asia Pacific, North America, South America and Africa – for their regional average levels in sugar, salt and fat.

It was found that on average, South America ranked highest in total sugars content (38g/100g), followed by North America (37g/100g), Asia Pacific (35g/100g), Europe (33g/100g) and Africa (27g/100g).

In terms of the average content in sodium, North America was top (0.6mg/100g), followed by Asia Pacific and Africa (both 0.5mg/100g), Europe and South America (both 0.4mg/100g).

As for fat content, Europe had the highest average of 3.1g/100g followed by South America (2.8g/100g), Asia Pacific and North America (both 1.8g/100g), and Africa (1.4g/100g).

Consumers can refer to this (October) issue of CHOICE for the scores of the 15 children's breakfast cereal found locally, based on the following weighting: total fat (15%); saturated fat (15%); total sugars (35%); sodium (20%); and dietary fibre (15%). The higher the score, the better.

Meanwhile, based on the findings of this 32-city study, the Consumers International (CI), the global federation of consumer organisations, is to release a report entitled: Cereal Offences: a wake up call on the marketing of unhealthy food to children, later this month.

The report will reveal the "shocking levels" of sugar and salt found in many popular children's cereals, as well as the marketing techniques that companies use to promote them to children and parents.

CI is calling for an international code for restricting the marketing of unhealthy food to children. The organization argues that this is the only effective means of ensuring all children are given adequate protection from the promotion of foods high in fat, sugar and salt.

Test results on performance and safety of electric storage water heaters

As winter approaches, a water heater that delivers hot water efficiently and safely is a necessity for many a household.

But given the many choices of water heaters in the market, it is no easy task to find one that fits the bill all round in performance and safety as well as ease of use.

The Consumer Council, in collaboration with the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD), has tested and evaluated 12 models of household

electric storage water heaters.

Included in the test were 6 models of the unvented type (also called central type) and 6 models of shower type (open-outlet type).

The former can be connected to multiple hot water taps (e.g. bath tubs, wash basins) while the latter can only be fitted with one unblocked showerhead without any on/off control valve.

In the test, the samples were rated overall based on: performance (60% on energy efficiency, preheating time, average temperature and maximum time of hot water delivery), safety (30%) and ease of use (10%).

On a 5-point overall rating, 2 samples of the unvented type were awarded 4.5 points and 4 samples scored 4 points. For the shower type, 2 samples achieved 4.5 points, 2 samples scored 4 points and the remainder 2 received only 3.5 points.

On safety, the test results indicated that all 12 samples were in compliance with the major requirements in the safety standard IEC60335-2-21.

In particular, all 6 unvented samples scored fully in overall safety rating, while only 2 of the shower type reached the same level in safety.

3 of the shower type samples received a slightly lower 4.5-point overall safety score. In a safety test which simulated the rare event of abnormal operation conditions of faulty thermostat and no water supply leading to an abnormal temperature build-up, the overheating resulted in damage to the samples' electrical insulations.

For the remainder one shower type sample, it received only 3.5 points in overall safety due to insufficient clearance and creepage distances at some internal parts, and unsatisfactory fire resistance of the plastic enclosure.

In October last year, a shower type electric water heater in a residential flat exploded. It was suspected that the accident was caused by the faulty thermostat and the installation of an on/off control valve at the water outlet.

Consumers are strongly advised that the water outlet of a shower type heater must remain unblocked. Never install an on/off control valve at the water outlet of the heater or connect the outlet to a basin or tub, to prevent excessive high pressure build-up inside the tank that could result in explosion.

On performance, the test results revealed considerable variations in energy efficiency – the higher the efficiency the less energy consumed in stand-by condition – which is both an environmental concern and impact on cost increase in electricity.

Under the grading criteria of EMSD's Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme, 3

of the samples would have been awarded the top score Grade 1 on the basis of the test. 3 other samples would receive only the least score Grade 5.

The samples were compared also for their delivery of hot water. Under the test condition, a sample's thermostat was set at 65°C and switched off after preheating. For the unvented type, the average temperature of hot water delivery ranged from 40°C to 58°C, while the shower type from 46°C to 63°C.

For the maximum time of hot water delivery (measured with the thermostat set at the maximum and hot water delivered at 50°C and 5 litres per minute until the temperature dropped to 40°C), the unvented type was found to range from 8.6 to 17.3 minutes while the shower type from 5.1 to 13.6 minutes.

Other safety advice for users to observe:

- The installation and alteration of any electric water heater must be carried out by a registered electrical contractor and a licensed plumber.
- If any abnormality is found, switch it off immediately and arrange inspection by an experienced technician.
- Switch off the heater after use; and arrange for regular inspection to maintain the device in safe condition.

Advice on purchase of genuine *Cordyceps sinensis*

Beware of the diverse array of *Cordyceps* products in the market.

Because of their well-known medicinal properties, the demand for *Cordyceps* products is on a steady upward trend. And so are their prices.

Due to the many species of *Cordyceps*, the Consumer Council advises consumers to decide beforehand what exactly they have in mind to purchase.

The most prized *Cordyceps* species of all is probably the *Cordyceps sinensis*, a valued traditional Chinese medicine, or commonly known in Chinese as "冬蟲夏草 winter worm summer grass".

As stated in the Chinese Pharmacopeia and the Schedule 2 of the Chinese Medicine Ordinance (Cap 549), "冬蟲夏草" is the composite substance of the stroma of *Cordyceps sinensis*.

So if what you want to purchase is *Cordyceps sinensis* – and not just any species of cordyceps – you should state so, in no uncertain terms, the name "冬蟲夏草" to the shop.

Cordyceps sinensis is anything but cheap; it costs easily a few thousand dollars a tael whereas other *Cordyceps* species are substantially cheaper.

Traders of Chinese herbal medicines are urged to label their products clearly to avoid confusion to consumers. Consumers should patronize licensed Chinese herbal retailers.

As the registration of proprietary Chinese medicine is now under way, *Cordyceps* products may still use their original product names which bear the wording "冬蟲夏草". The products should not carry any misleading names on their labels.

When choosing health food products made from *Cordyceps*, consumers are advised to read carefully the details of product description and the ingredient list to determine whether the product contains *Cordyceps sinensis*.

On the ingredient list, they could not state *Cordyceps sinensis* or "冬蟲夏草" if in fact they do not contain it.

Timely checklist to save on household budget in face of inflation and economic crisis

Brace yourself for the hard times ahead as inflation coupled with a global financial crisis hits.

The Consumer Council has compiled a comprehensive checklist of over 120 pieces of simple consumer advice that you can put into practice in everyday life to save and cut down on your hard-pressed household budget.

In the process, you will also help contribute to conservation and a sustainable lifestyle. Here are some highlights.

For instance, in the use of electrical appliances, such as air-conditioner, washer, refrigerator, always look for the EMSD Grade 1 Energy Efficiency label, to reduce electricity costs.

In lighting, replace all incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent lamps which save electricity consumption up to 80%. Always turn off the lights when leaving the room or not in use.

A television set is on standby mode when switched off by the remote control, thus continuing to consume electricity. Use the main power switch on the TV set, or better still switch off at the electricity supply socket or extension cord.

The same applies to set-top box to watch digital TV broadcast. Therefore, when not watching, remember to cut off the power supply.

Continual running of a computer consumes significant amount of electricity. Have proper settings for power management so that the monitor and hard disk can automatically shut down or the system can enter hibernation mode when idle for some time.

If you need a mobile phone for only phone call and messaging, a simple basic type will suffice. Many new mobile phones provide a lot of functions that users seldom use.

Some general principles to save on food: don't waste food; purchase fresh foods or order dishes in restaurants of suitable amount and take leftovers back home.

Buy foods with similar nutritional value but with lower price, e.g. seasonal foods are always less expensive, and pricey organic foods do not have, in theory, a higher nutritional quality compared with ordinary foods.

Cook foods the energy efficient way e.g. steaming or boiling instead of stewing or frying. Take advantage of different cooking appliances e.g. microwave oven, induction cooker, pressure cooker and thermal cooker, to save energy and cooking time.

Remember money saving on food and diet does not mean the sacrifice of good quality foods or food hygiene.

Make it a practice to buy foods at shops with good hygiene and reputation. Don't buy foods beyond expiry date.

In food preparation, use separate utensils to handle raw and cooked food. The kitchen and utensils should be washed and kept clean.

Make sure foods are cooked thoroughly. Cover leftovers and store them in refrigerator for not longer than 3 days. Leftovers should be reheated thoroughly before consumption and should not be reheated more than once.

Taking bath in a shower is preferable to save water and energy. Use cold or warm water in the summer time if possible. The used water may be collected to flush the toilet.

In daily skin care and makeup, before going out to shop, prepare a checklist estimating the types and amount of cosmetics needed with consideration given to suitable skin type and climate.

Pay heed to manufacturing date, storage period and period of use after opening of the product. Label the product with dates of purchase and remind yourself to use it up in time.

When it comes to clothings, don't buy on impulse. Spend time organizing the wardrobe, determine the needs and make a short list of items to buy.

Bear in mind that trendy clothes will only last one season. Buy good quality and designs that will stay in style, or color-coordinated clothes that can easily mix and match when on sale or clearance.

Take good care of the clothings so that they will last longer. Separate clothes according to fabric or dirtiness. Wash clothes according to the washing instructions, let them dry completely before storage, and place dehumidifying agents to remove moisture in a cabinet or wardrobe. Contribute unwanted old clothings to charity or recycle bins.

CHOICE magazine is now also available online (at <http://choice.yp.com.hk>) and via fixed-line and mobile services of PCCW.

Chairing the press conference today (October 16) on the publication of CHOICE issue number 384 is Mr. Ambrose HO, Chairman of Publicity and Community Relations Committee of the Consumer Council.

Members from the media who are invited by this Council to the Press Conference may quote the content of this Press Statement.

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