

FDA says bee pollen weight loss products pose health risks

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Some contain undeclared ingredients that can harm people with high blood pressure, other ailments, agency says.

(HealthDay)—Some bee pollen products marketed for weight loss may actually threaten your health, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration warns.

These potentially dangerous products have been found to contain undeclared ingredients that may harm people who have conditions such as [high blood pressure](#), irregular heartbeat and bipolar disorder, the agency said.

According to the FDA, the undeclared ingredients sibutramine and/or phenolphthalein have been found in the following bee pollen [weight loss](#) products: Zi Xiu Tang, Ultimate Formula, Fat Zero, Bella Vi Amp'd Up, Insane Amp'd Up, Slim Trim U, Infinity, Perfect Body Solution, Asset Extreme, Asset Extreme Plus, Asset Bold, and Asset Bee Pollen.

Sibutramine was removed from the U.S. market in late 2010 after studies showed that it increased people's risk of heart attack and stroke. Phenolphthalein, a laxative and a suspected cancer-causing agent, isn't approved in the United States, the FDA said.

The agency said it has received more than 50 reports of problems caused by tainted bee pollen weight loss products, including at least one death, serious heart issues, chest pain, heart palpitations, increased heart rate, elevated blood pressure, seizures, suicidal thoughts, anxiety, insomnia and diarrhea.

The FDA is testing other bee pollen weight loss products suspected to contain undeclared drugs.

The FDA also noted that many bee pollen products make unproven claims about treating or preventing a number of diseases and signs or symptoms of disease, including obesity, allergies, high blood pressure and cholesterol.

"When people buy these tainted bee pollen weight loss products, they are unknowingly taking one or more hidden drugs that have been banned from the market," Gary Coody, FDA's national health fraud coordinator, said in an agency news release.

Consumers and health care professionals should report any adverse events caused by bee pollen products to the FDA's MedWatch program at fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch"
target="_blank">www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch.

"It is tempting to believe that a quick and effortless weight loss supplement is safe for use," Jason Humbert, a senior regulatory manager with FDA's Office of Regulatory Affairs, said in the news release. "But given the fact that these products contain a hidden dangerous ingredient,

consumers should avoid taking them."

More information: The U.S. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases explains how to choose a [safe and successful weight loss program](#).

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