



新聞稿 PRESS RELEASE

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### **CUHK Demonstrates Quality Control Methods for Common Chinese Medicine**

The Chinese Medicinal Material Research Centre (CMMRC) of **The Chinese University of Hong Kong** will display and demonstrate the latest methods and equipments for checking proprietary Chinese medicines made in Hong Kong at the "**Hong Kong Technology Exhibition 97**" to be held at the Hong Kong Convention Centre on 6-9 January, 1997.

The CMMRC received a grant from the Hong Kong Government Industry Department in 1995 to establish a **Laboratory for the Chemical Quality Control of Chinese Medicines and Health Foods** to help the manufacturing industry to develop and establish quality control methods and programmes for Chinese medicines.

The CMMRC will demonstrate at the Exhibition the application of HPLC to distinguish between genuine and faked *American Ginseng Tea*, Atomic Absorption Spectroscopy of analyse the contents of arsenic in *Niu Huang Jiedu Pien*, and many other methods to test the chemical quality of common Chinese medicines on sale in Hong Kong. Also shown is the application of DNA-fingerprinting in authentication of Chinese herbs.

Professor Paul But, Director of CMMRC, said, "The therapeutic value of Chinese medicine is well accepted by the public. Recent scientific research has identified many bioactive components in Chinese herbs, plus confirmed the empirical knowledge in the application of many Chinese medicines. However, the production of Chinese medicines usually lacks proper quality control, resulting in substandard or even harmful products. This has damage the reputation of Chinese medicines and deterred users."

A good example is the poisoning incident due to excessive amount of arsenic in *Niu Huang Jiedu Pien* in Macau last October. The Macau Government decided to enforce a complete ban on all brands of similar products. Last May in Hong Kong, the Department of Health also instructed the herbal industry to stop selling the *Weilingxian* (*Clematis chinensis*) for fear that the herb might be contaminated by a toxic herb, *Guijiu* (*Podophyllum hexandrum*). Poisoning incidents in Australia caused by improperly precessed herbs, *Chuanwu* and *Fuzi* (*Aconitum carmichaeli*), have led to import ban of aconite herbs from the country.

"These are isolated incidents but clearly illustrate the importance of quality assurance in Chinese medicines" said Professor But.

"Mainland China and other overseas markets have already implemented quality assurance

requirements on Chinese medicines, particularly on the imported ones. Hong Kong is also initiating a system to manage and control Chinese medicines. Quality assurance is the only solution to sustain and develop markets of Chinese medicines and guard the reputation of Chinese medicines," he continue.

"Local manufacturing industry has now recognised the importance of the issue and started initiating programmes for quality assurance. The CMMRC will offer manufacturers technical assistance with support from Industry Department. The National Institute for the Control of Pharmaceutical and Biological Products in Beijing is also collaborating with the CMMRC to conduct research on quality control of Chinese medicines. These joint efforts will help to upgrade quality assurance of Chinese medicines and improve the production of quality Chinese medicine," said Professor But.

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