

MEDICAL REGISTRATION ORDINANCE (Chapter 161)

ORDER MADE BY THE MEDICAL COUNCIL OF HONG KONG  
DR YUE VINCENT WING SHUN (REGISTRATION NO.: M06173)

It is hereby notified that after due inquiry held on 6 March 2018 in accordance with section 21 of the Medical Registration Ordinance, Chapter 161 of the Laws of Hong Kong, the Medical Council of Hong Kong found Dr YUE Vincent Wing Shun (Registration No.: M06173) guilty of the following disciplinary offence:—

‘That on or about 30 January 2014, he, being a registered medical practitioner, disregarded his professional responsibility to his patient LEUNG Lam Pak (‘the Patient’) in that he prescribed Europain (which contained Paracetamol) to the Patient when he knew or ought to have known that the Patient was allergic to Paracetamol.

In relation to the facts alleged, he has been guilty of misconduct in a professional respect.’

Dr YUE was at all material times a registered medical practitioner. His name has been included in the General Register from 29 July 1986 to present and his name has never been included in the Specialist Register.

In the morning of 30 January 2014, the Patient, who was then 74 years old, consulted Dr YUE at his clinic for upper respiratory tract infection. During the consultation, Dr YUE prescribed various drugs including Europain 500 mg to the Patient.

Europain contains Paracetamol and it should not be prescribed to a patient who is allergic to Paracetamol.

There is no dispute that the Patient had consulted Dr YUE on and off since 1995. Dr YUE became aware in 2006 that the Patient was allergic to Paracetamol. According to Dr YUE, he then documented in red ‘allergic to Panadol’ on the front page of the Patient’s consultation card and ‘Sensitive to Panadol’ on each of the subsequent consultation cards for the Patient.

The Patient developed generalized rash and shortness of breath after taking one tablet of Europain prescribed by Dr YUE and had to be admitted to the Accident and Emergency Department of the Prince of Wales Hospital (‘PWH’) later in the afternoon of 30 January 2014.

According to the medical records obtained from PWH, the Patient was hospitalized until 1 February 2014. During his stay in PWH, the Patient’s allergic reactions to Paracetamol were treated with medications.

The Patient’s son subsequently lodged this complaint against Dr YUE with the Medical Council.

Dr YUE admitted the factual particulars of the disciplinary charge against him.

Dr YUE was fully aware that the Patient had a medical history of allergic reactions to Paracetamol. And yet, Dr YUE still prescribed the Patient with Europain, which contained Paracetamol.

Patients are entitled to, and they often do, rely on doctors to exercise reasonable care and competence in avoiding prescription of drug to which they have a known allergy.

Allergic reaction to drug is not dose-dependent, and can be triggered by even a small dose. Moreover, allergic reaction to drug can be very serious and potentially life-threatening. In a patient with a reported allergy to a particular drug, the risk of having an allergic reaction after taking the same drug again would be high.

Prescription of Europain to the Patient, whom Dr YUE well knew was allergic to Paracetamol, was inappropriate and unsafe. If Dr YUE had taken adequate note of the Patient’s history of allergy, he ought to have considered whether there were safer alternatives than Europain.

In the Medical Council’s view, Dr YUE’s conduct had fallen below the standards expected of registered medical practitioners in Hong Kong. The Medical Council therefore found Dr YUE guilty of professional misconduct as charged.

Taking into account the whole circumstances and the mitigation advanced by Dr YUE's lawyer, the Medical Council ordered that Dr YUE's name be removed from the General Register for a period of 1 month and the operation of the removal order be suspended for a period of 12 months.

The orders are published in the *Gazette* in accordance with section 21(5) of the Medical Registration Ordinance. The full decision of the Medical Council is published in the official website of the Medical Council of Hong Kong (<http://www.mchk.org.hk>).

LAU Wan-ye, Joseph *Chairman, The Medical Council of Hong Kong*