Dietary Supplement or Conventional Food?

Athlete Scenerio

As an athlete, I know that using dietary supplements can be risky for my health and possibly cause me to test positive for banned substances. How can I tell the difference between dietary supplements and conventional foods?

Dietary supplements versus food—Know the facts!

- The US government strictly regulates foods for ingredients, additives, manufacturing practices, safety, and packaging.
- Under the Dietary Supplement Health Education Act (DSHEA) dietary supplements are not required to be registered with or obtain pre-market approval by FDA, providing no assurance of purity, safety, or effectiveness.
- FDA must show that a supplement is "unsafe" before removing it from the market. Before bringing a supplement to market, manufacturers are not required to share with consumers or FDA any information on safety or effectiveness of supplements.
- Dietary supplements may cause adverse health effects and a positive test for banned substances.

How to play it safe

- Understand that athletes are responsible for all that they ingest.
- Check trusted resources that test dietary supplements: NSF International (www.NSF.org), US Pharmacopia (www.USP.org), Informed Choice (www.informed-choice.org). Strict FDA regulation of foods makes independent testing for additives in foods unnecessary.
- Read the label closely. Only foods have a Nutrition Facts label. Dietary supplements have a Supplements Facts label and a disclaimer: "This statement has not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent disease."
- Consult a registered dietitian (RD) who specializes in sports, particularly a
 Board Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics (CSSD), for advice on choosing
 safe supplements and customizing your nutrition plan. Find a SCAN RD at
 www.scandpg.org.

Written by SCAN registered dietitians (RDs). The key to optimal meal planning for athletes is individualization. For personalized nutrition plans contact a SCAN sports dietitian or Board Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics (CSSD) by accessing "Find a SCAN Dietitian" at www.scandpg.org | 800.249.2875.





Tips to Take With You

- 1. Food first! A well-designed diet will safely supply energy and nutrients to fuel the body, enhance training, build muscle, and promote optimal performance.
- 2. When additional nutrition and hydration are needed, first supplement your meals with foods and beverages that have a Nutrition Facts label. Sports drinks, bars, and gels can be useful in supplementing an athlete's diet.
- 3. Know and adhere to the regulations of your sport's governing body. Athletes are fully responsible for all they ingest.

Contact SCAN

Web site: www.scandpg.org Voice: 800.249.2875