

Get the facts

- Federal regulations are different for dietary supplements from those for prescription and over-the-counter medicines.
- If you are thinking about using a dietary supplement, first get information on it from reliable sources. Keep in mind that dietary supplements may interact with medications or may contain ingredients not listed on the label.
- Tell your healthcare providers about any complementary and alternative practices you use, including dietary supplements. Give them a full picture of what you do to manage your health.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Association of Complementary and Alternative Medicine.



Use the Three D's

When using online resources

- **Dates:** Find the most recent information. Reputable websites have the date for each article.
- **Documentation:** Check the source of information. Websites created by major medical centers, universities and government agencies are most credible.
- **Double-check.** Visit several health sites and compare information

Source: MayoClinic

Online Resources

- National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) <http://nccam.nih.gov>
- Office of Dietary Supplements http://ods.od.nih.gov/health_information/health_information.aspx
- Federal Drug Administration (FDA) Do you have side effects from your medicines? Report these side effects to the FDA's MedWatch Program. <http://www.fda.gov>
- Medication disposal? Not sure how to throw away your dietary supplements? <http://www.smarxtdisposal.net>

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Dietary
Supplements
Stay informed about your
health

What is a dietary supplement?

According to the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA), a dietary supplement is a product that:

- Is intended to supplement the diet
- Contains one or more dietary ingredients (including vitamins, minerals, herbs or other botanicals, amino acids, and certain other substances) or their constituents.
- Is intended to be taken by mouth, in forms such as tablets, capsules, powders, soft gel, gel cap or liquid.
- Is labeled as a dietary supplement.



◆ Coenzyme Q-10

How does it work? Important for producing energy in cells; believed to decrease with age

Common Use: angina, congestive heart failure, high blood pressure

Dose: 150 – 600 mg daily in divided doses; 100 mg daily given as either 50 mg twice daily or 33.3 mg three times daily

Side effects: Nausea and diarrhea

◆ Cranberry

How does it work? Antibacterial, antioxidant

Common Use: Prevention of urinary tract infection

Dose: capsule or tablet, oral: 100 to 500 mg standardized cranberry extract 2 to 3 times daily
Juice, oral: 300 milliliters (mL) daily or 250 mL three times daily unsweetened or saccharin-sweetened cranberry juice

Side effects: kidney problems

◆ Fish Oil (Omega-3)

How does it work? Anti-inflammatory effect

Common Use: high cholesterol (lower triglycerides)

Dose: 3 gm per day

Freeze fish oils capsules and take at night to avoid fishy taste. Fish oil capsules can spoil. Consider switching products or buying fresh fish oil if belching foul fishy taste does not go away.

Side effects: Mild indigestion, fishy taste

Product: Want 3:2 EPA to DHA essential fatty acids.

Products with higher ratio of EPA to DHA may have mood elevating effects.

Companies that produce brands that have a 7:1 ratio include: Omegabrite (omegabrite.com), NOW (Super EPA) and Nordicnaturals (EPA Xtra)

◆ Glucosamine

How does it work? Helps supplement altered glucosamine metabolism (which is thought to be related to osteoarthritis development)

Common Use: Osteoarthritis

Dose: 1500 mg in single or 3 divided doses daily

Side effects: drowsiness, headache, insomnia,

◆ Probiotics (Lactobacillus)

How does it work? "Good" bacteria that live in our colon (large intestine). Produce lactic acid and hydrogen peroxide that keeps the growth of "bad" bacteria in check.

Common Use: Antibiotic-induced diarrhea, indigestion

Dose: 1 billion to 10 billion organisms taken daily or twice daily for 4 – 8 weeks. Refrigerate after opening bottle.

Side effects: stomach upset, nausea

◆ Progesterone Cream

How does it work? Balances the natural ratio of estrogen to progesterone

Common Use: menopausal symptoms in women

Dose: 20 – 30 mg applied to the skin daily

(~1/4 to 1/2 teaspoonful)

Premenstrual syndrome - Begin using several days before the onset of symptoms. Discontinue with onset of menses

Menopause – use for last 14 days of cycle or daily

Side effects: irregular menstrual cycle

Product: Make sure that the product contains only natural ingredients, no herbal precursors (i.e. sarsapogenin and diosgenin). Compounding pharmacies are more cost effective than buying over the counter products.

◆ Psyllium/Fiber

How does it work? Absorbs water

Common use: Constipation, high cholesterol

Dose: Take 1 tablespoonful in 8 – 10 oz of water daily or 1 teaspoonful in 6 – 8 oz of water before each meal.

Side effects: Nausea and diarrhea

Products: Psyllium (Metamucil and others), Guar gum (Benefiber) less gritty and tastes better than psyllium but is more expensive, and Ground flax seed.

◆ Red Yeast Rice

How does it work? Has cholesterol reducing properties

Active Ingredient: Lovastatin

Common Use: high cholesterol

Dose: 0.6 grams twice daily

Side effects: dizziness, heartburn, flatulence, severe change in muscle pain

Products: Unavailable in health food stores. Can still buy this product online.

Source: Accessed May 2009.

- University of Wisconsin – Madison Integrative Medicine Patient and Clinician Handouts <http://www.fammed.wisc.edu/integrative>
- Micromedex
- Office of Dietary Supplements Fact Sheets http://ods.od.nih.gov/health_information/health_information.aspx