



# Health Alert

## Save Yourself From Suspicious Supplements

(NAPSA)—Protecting your health is important to everyone. That's why the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) wants you to know that there are many dangerous products unlawfully marketed as "dietary supplements" that contain hidden drugs and chemicals. These products are sold for all sorts of conditions including weight loss, sexual enhancement, bodybuilding, arthritis and diabetes. They can contain hidden prescription ingredients at levels much higher than those found in approved drugs.

Using these bogus products may place you at risk of injury or death especially if you have other health problems. They may interact in dangerous ways with other medicines you are taking. FDA has received many reports of harm including stroke, liver injury, kidney failure, heart palpitations and death.

The experts at FDA offer these clues that a product may be tainted. Beware of products that:

- Promise rapid or long-lasting effects for sexual enhancement
- Are labeled in foreign languages
- Claim to be a legal alternative to anabolic steroids
- Warn you may test positive for performance-enhancing drugs
- Promise quick and easy weight loss
- Are marketed using e-mail spam or unsolicited faxes
- Include directions and warnings that resemble those of FDA-approved drug products.

Be proactive—do your research before buying these types of products, especially if you find them on the Internet. If you use or are considering using any product marketed as a dietary supplement,



**If the health claims of a dietary supplement seem too good to be true—they probably are.**

check with your health care provider.

Ask yourself if the claims sound too good to be true or seem to be unrealistic or extreme. Be on the lookout for these "red flag" claims, including "quick cure," "secret ingredient," "new discovery," "cure-all" or "instant pain relief."

Remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

### What To Do

If you or someone you care about has been hurt by a tainted dietary supplement, call (800) FDA-1088 or visit FDA online at [www.fda.gov/safety/MedWatch](http://www.fda.gov/safety/MedWatch).

To report a product you suspect may be tainted, e-mail [Tainted-Products@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:Tainted-Products@fda.hhs.gov), or to anonymously report "Suspected Criminal Activity," complete the form available at [www.fda.gov/oci](http://www.fda.gov/oci). For more information on how to spot health fraud scams, visit [www.fda.gov/healthfraud](http://www.fda.gov/healthfraud).