

What is a Dietary Supplement?

A dietary supplement is a pill, capsule, tablet, powder, liquid or other food form intended to supplement a whole food diet by providing any combination of the following:

- Vitamins
- Minerals
- Amino acids
- Herbs and botanicals (leaves, bark, stems, berries, roots, seed of plants)

Sports supplements are a classification of dietary supplements, often designed to have an "ergogenic benefit" by increasing nutrient intake, lean mass, energy levels, or recovery



Athletes: Use of any dietary supplement is at your own risk. YOU are responsible and accountable for any supplements that you ingest.

What to Keep in Mind When Choosing to Take a Supplement?

Dietary supplements are not regulated by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA), creating concerns about safety, purity, and efficacy.

Specific to athletes, common concerns are:

- Supplements may contain banned substances even if unlisted on the label
- Ingredients may adversely interact with medication
- Numerous ingredients in sport supplements increase the risk of contamination with harmful or banned substances

Dietary supplements can have a purpose...

- They may help improve nutrient deficiencies (identified by a diet assessment and/or blood analysis to a greater degree than food sources)
- They may help to increase intake of essential nutrients, after improvements in dietary sources have already been made
- They may provide necessary or a more efficient delivery of nutrients when food sources are limited, such as during travel, or when food choices/intakes are limited



Where is Your Supplement?

Educate Yourself Before Making Decisions (www.USADA.org)

- Consult with a Sport Dietitian or professional who is familiar with the WADA Prohibited List before taking supplements.
- Follow a dietary plan that allows you to adapt to training to maximize your performance. Dietary alterations may replace the need for any particular supplement.
- There is a variable level of risk associated with dietary supplement use. Vitamins and minerals produced by reputable pharmaceutical companies, especially those tested by a third party organization, are less likely to be associated with inadvertent drug tests, but there is no guarantee.
- Be aware: Supplements claiming fat-burning/weight loss, performance gains, and pre-workout mixtures are more likely to be contaminated with anabolic steroids, stimulants, and other banned substances. Remember: There are no quick fixes for improving sports performance.
- Do not take a supplement because a teammate or a competitor is taking it or recommends it. Consult with a Sport Dietitian or professional first.
- Do not take any supplements that make claims that sound too good to be true. Always validate product claims through non-biased sources.

Common Third Party Testing Groups and Their Testing Measures

Third party testing groups are companies that conduct various levels of screening to promote health and safety and reduce your risk of testing positive for prohibited substances (listed on the WADA Prohibited List). A dietary supplement should be tested for **WADA Prohibited Banned Substances** for it to be considered for use. However, just because a product is tested, does not mean it is appropriate for use in all circumstances. Third party groups have varying levels of detection and numbers of substances or analytes that they test for in each product. For this reason, USADA released a statement in May 2019 supporting the NSF Certified for Sport certification for athletes looking to decrease the risk of positive tests due to dietary supplement use.

Procedures	Consumer Labs (paid service)	USP	BSCG	Informed Choice	NSF
# of Screened WADA Banned Substances			254+	200+	270+
Random GMP* Audits	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Toxicology Assessment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Testing of Raw Materials	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Label Verification	✓	✓	Only if part of "Certified Quality" program		✓

*Good Manufacturing Practices

USADA recognizes the NSF Certified for Sport program as meeting the essential criteria for a third-party certifier and as a program available to athletes to reduce their risk if they choose to use supplements.

Athlete Recommendations: