

# RISK OF SUPPLEMENT USE

Extreme caution is recommended regarding supplement use. A number of positive tests have been attributed to the misuse of supplements, poor labeling or contamination of dietary supplements.

The use of supplements by athletes is a concern because in many countries the manufacturing and labeling of supplements may not follow strict rules, which may lead to a supplement containing an undeclared substance that is prohibited under anti-doping regulations. Pleading that a poorly labeled dietary supplement was taken is not an adequate defense in a doping hearing.

**Risks of supplements include:**

- Manufacturing standards, which are often less strict when compared with medications. These lower standards often lead to supplement contamination with an undeclared prohibited substance, for example when manufacturing equipment isn't cleaned to the required standards and contains remnants of ingredients from a previous product.
- Fake or low-quality products which may contain prohibited substances and be harmful to health.
- Mislabeling of supplements with ingredients wrongly listed and prohibited substances not identified on the product label.
- False claims that a particular supplement is endorsed by Anti-Doping Organizations (ADOs) or that it is "safe for athletes". Remember, ADOs do not certify supplements and the product label may contain misleading messaging.

Athletes should do a risk-benefit assessment if they are considering the use of supplements. The first step of such an assessment is to consider whether a "food-first" approach meets the athlete's needs. Whenever possible, such assessment should be done with a support of a certified nutritionist or other qualified professional who is familiar with the global and WCBS Anti-Doping Rules.

**Checking your supplements**

If, after careful consideration, an athlete chooses to use supplements, they must take the necessary steps to minimize the risks associated with supplements. This includes:

- Thorough research on the type and dose of the supplement, preferably with the advice of a certified nutritionist or other qualified professional who is familiar with Anti-Doping Rules.
- Only selecting supplements that have been "batch-tested" by an independent company.
- Remembering what supplement they take, keep some of it in case they get a positive result, and keep any proof of purchase and declare it on the Doping Control Form (DCF).

Remember, no supplement is 100% risk-free but athletes and athlete support personnel can take certain steps to minimize these risks.

Neither WADA nor WCBS is involved in any supplement certification process and therefore do not certify or endorse manufacturers or their products. WADA and WCBS do not control the quality or the claims of the supplements industry.