

Nutritional Supplement Purchase Guide

Presented by NeoVitin.com



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Introduction

Taking Nutritional Supplements can be a great way to safely acquire the essential nutrients your body needs to function optimally. However, there are many potential issues that consumers face when purchasing Nutritional Supplements, and determining whether or not they are getting the most out of the supplements that they are taking. This report is going to focus on a few key ideas that will better equip you to make a decision when purchasing Nutritional Supplements, and ensure that you are receiving the potential benefits that Nutritional Supplements can provide.

What are Nutritional Supplements?

In order to understand the problems that consumers face when purchasing Health Supplements, it is important to first understand some background information. In 1994, the U.S. Congress enacted the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) to help provide more specific information regarding Dietary Supplements, or Nutritional Supplements, to the general public. According to this Act, Congress defines Dietary Supplements as “a product (other than tobacco) that

- Is intended to supplement the diet;
- Contains one or more dietary ingredients (including vitamins; minerals; herbs; or other botanicals);



- amino acids; and other substances) or their constituents;
- Is intended to be taken by mouth as a pill, capsule, tablet, or liquid; and
- Is labeled on the front panel as being a dietary supplement.”¹

Knowing this standard definition for Dietary Supplements can help the consumer better understand what is actually in the supplements they are looking at, and what designates them as a dietary supplement, and not as something else. As we will discuss in more detail later, the designation of a product as a Dietary Supplement carries with it some unique issues that the purchaser must be aware of in order to make an informed decision.

Another key take away from the 1994 DSHEA are the definitions of “dietary ingredients,” and “new dietary ingredients.” It is clear that we as consumers must know what actually goes into the Nutritional Supplements that we are taking. The DSHEA specifically defined “dietary ingredients” to help us understand what exactly we are dealing with when talking about Dietary Supplements and their components. According to the DSHEA, Congress defines “dietary ingredients” as “...one or any combination of the following substances:

- A vitamin,
- A mineral,
- An herb or other botanical,
- An amino acid,
- A dietary substance for use by man to supplement the diet by increasing the total dietary intake (e.g., enzymes or tissues from organs or glands), or
- A concentrate, metabolite, constituent, or extract.”²

It is clear after reading this definition that there are a variety of ingredients that are in dietary supplements that the Federal Government considers to be “dietary ingredients.” Additionally, Congress did not limit Dietary Supplements to only contain “dietary ingredients” in the DSHEA. Congress also defined “new dietary ingredients” to go along with the aforementioned “dietary ingredients.” The DSHEA provides the following definition, “A ‘new dietary ingredient’ is one that meets the above definition for a ‘dietary ingredient’ and was not sold in the U.S. in a dietary supplement before October 15, 1994.” This helps clarify what is the difference between a “dietary ingredient,” and a “new dietary ingredient”³

Can I Buy FDA Approved Supplements?

Now that you have a better understanding of the basics of Nutritional Supplements, we will discuss why it is important to have a clear understanding of the role of the FDA in dealing with Dietary Supplements. Many people ask which Nutritional Supplements are FDA approved.

¹ <http://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/dietarysupplements.asp>

² <http://www.fda.gov/Food/DietarySupplements/ConsumerInformation/ucm110417.htm#what>

³ <http://www.fda.gov/Food/DietarySupplements/ConsumerInformation/ucm110417.htm#what>

Although the FDA does have a role in the selling of Dietary Supplements, they do not ‘approve’ supplements. The most important point to know when purchasing a Nutritional Supplement is that the ***FDA does not regulate the effectiveness of supplements***. Unlike prescription drugs, the FDA does not require distributors and manufacturers to test and prove the effectiveness of the Nutritional Supplements they market. As a result, there are restrictions on the claims that companies are allowed to make on their labels and in advertising. The FDA generally allows claims that they themselves have authorized based on extensive prior scientific study.

For the purposes of purchasing a Nutritional Supplement, it is best to be cautious when it comes to claims that distributors and manufacturers make regarding their supplements. When buying a supplement, make sure that the seller does not make unreasonable claims, and that those claims can be substantiated. If you believe the claims are false, you should ask the distributor how they can back those claims up, and if they are legitimate. This is the best way to ensure that you do not buy a product that does not live up to what the seller says.

What Does the FDA Regulate?

Although the FDA does not regulate effectiveness of a specific Nutritional Supplement, the organization does regulate the manufacturing process, and the ingredients. In 2007, the FDA mandated that by 2010, all Dietary Supplement manufacturers must comply with a set of current good manufacturing practices. The rule deals with quality assurances in the manufacturing, packaging, labeling, and storing of Dietary Supplements.⁴ The key effect of this rule is to help ensure that the Nutritional Supplement manufacturers produce Dietary Supplements that contain the ingredients stated on the label, ingredients in the correct purity and strength, and that contain no contaminants. This helps consumers make better decisions regarding Nutritional Supplements, because they are able to feel confident that the supplement they are purchasing has the ingredients that the label states.

This new law is designed to ensure that U.S. manufacturers are producing quality products. It is important to make sure that the manufacturer of the Nutritional Supplement you are purchasing is certified that it complies with the current good manufacturing practices as set forth by the FDA. When looking to purchase Dietary Supplements, it is especially important to be careful with those made outside of the U.S. Make sure that you understand the laws regarding the manufacturing of Nutritional Supplements in that country, especially if you are ordering off the internet.

Choosing A Brand

As mentioned multiple times before, the FDA does not regulate the effectiveness of Nutritional Supplements. Therefore, it is important to make sure that the distributor, or seller, of the

⁴ <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/2007/ucm108938.htm>

supplements is a reputable company. Make sure that the company is very open about what is in the supplement, and who manufactures the product. Also, if the seller is the company who designed the supplement formula, make sure that they are someone who has the knowledge necessary to create a reasonable formula. Many different people can design a supplement formula, so it is important to know that the company is adequately equipped to formulate a supplement that contains sensible amounts of ingredients, and a reasonable combination of those ingredients.

Check the Label

Obviously, the most important part of the Nutritional Supplement is what is inside it. With the current good manufacturing practices regulations, you can be confident that what is on the label is in the supplement. However, you have to look at the label to fully understand what any Nutritional Supplement provides. The back of the label will give you all of the important information you need to know about any Nutritional Supplement. It will give you a list of all of the ingredients, the quantity of those ingredients, and the amount of the Nutritional Supplement that is in the bottle. The label will help you determine if the product contains the ingredients that you are looking for, and what exactly you are paying for.

Supplement Facts					
Servings size: 2 tablets			Servings per container: 30		
INGREDIENTS	AMT	%DV	INGREDIENTS	AMT	%DV
Vitamin A	3500IU	70%	Manganese	2mg	100%
Vitamin B6	2mg	100%	Chromium	100mcg	83%
Vitamin B12	10mcg	166%	Copper	2mg	100%
Vitamin C	60mg	100%	Molybdenum	75mcg	100%
Vitamin D	400IU	100%	Selenium	30mcg	43%
Vitamin E	40IU	133%	Iodine	100mcg	67%
Folic Acid	400mcg	100%	Boron	150mcg	*
Thiamine	1.5mg	100%			
Niacin	40mg	200%	Proprietary Blend	1165mg	
Calcium	200mg	20%	Curcumin		
Biotin	50mcg	17%	Green Tea Extract		
Riboflavin	1.5mg	88%	L-Carnitine		
Magnesium	50mg	13%	Ginseng Extract		

*Daily Value Not Established
Percent Daily Value Are Based On A 2000 Calorie Diet

Don't Forget to Talk to Your Doctor

Once you have found a reputable seller, it is then important to determine what nutrients your diet actually needs. It is vital that you consult your physician before starting any type of Nutritional Supplement program. You and your doctor can go over the areas of your diet that are lacking, and which ones are sufficient. Then, you can decide on which formulas meet your needs and your goals. Additionally, your doctor can tell you if a supplement may have an adverse effect on any condition you have or medications that you take. It is possible for a Nutritional Supplement to have a reaction with your current medications, or it may have an effect on your preexisting conditions. Therefore, it is extremely important to not take a supplement without help from your doctor, especially if you are taking any kind of medication.

Where Should I buy Nutritional Supplements?

Now that you know how to choose a Nutritional Supplement that is right for you, the next question is, where do I get them? There are many different retail outlets that sell a variety of Nutritional Supplements. Most chain pharmacy stores and local pharmacies will have at least

some Nutritional Supplements. Additionally, many grocery stores now carry Nutritional Supplements, along with most other chain discount stores that carry over the counter medicines.

In addition to buying Nutritional Supplements at these locations, you can also purchase them online. There are many benefits to purchasing a Nutritional Supplement online, but there are some potential issues to be aware of. As is the case with any online store, make sure that they are reputable and provide a secure way to make your payment. The online retailer should also provide you with some type of picture of the label that will allow you to see all of the ingredients. Also, make sure that the owners will provide you with additional information upon request. It is good to ask many questions when purchasing a Nutritional Supplement, and is therefore important that the online seller provides a means to ask those questions, and answers them in a timely manner.

Key Takeaways

Overall, there are many potential benefits to taking Nutritional Supplements. They can provide your body with the essential nutrients it needs but is not getting through normal diet alone. However, there are many issues to consider when purchasing a Nutritional Supplement, including the manufacturer's compliance with certified good manufacturing practices, the trustworthiness of the distributor, and the compatibility of the ingredients with your needs. The main takeaways are that you know that the FDA does not regulate the supplement's effectiveness, and that you should check with your physician before you start a Nutritional Supplement program. With these guidelines, you have the knowledge to make an informed and safe decision when you purchase Nutritional Supplements.

The logo for NEOVITIN features the brand name in a blue, serif, all-caps font. The letters 'NEO' are in a lighter shade of blue, while 'VITIN' is in a darker shade. Below the text is a stylized blue wave graphic that curves under the letters.