

25, 35 or 45 Be Careful with Dietary Supplements

We continue to hear about athlete after athlete testing positive for banned substances other than HGH or steroids. In some cases, the positive tests not only shock the close nit sporting community the athlete participates in but in some cases also the athlete!

As a practicing drug free athlete and advocate, I usually find this hard to believe. How could elite veteran athletes who train religiously for years adamantly against drugs, many at the peak of their career take any chances with banned substances when they are sure to be drug tested at some point?

Misleading and mislabelled dietary supplements!

At first blush that sounds like the typical I didn't do it – drug abusing guilty athlete! However, after a detained investigation I found a number of athletes who have received bans from governing bodies because they used off the shelf nationally branded product labelled incorrectly.

While that sounds impossible and illegal in today's heavily regulated drug market, it isn't and you might even be shocked at how the billion dollar plus dietary supplement market is regulated and consumers protected!

In short, the dietary supplement market is governed by the rule of "innocent, marketed, sold and consumed until proven guilty"!

Although dietary supplements are regulated by the FDA as foods, they are regulated differently from other foods and from drugs. For example, a dietary supplement manufacturer does not have to prove a product's safety and effectiveness before it is marketed.

Also, unlike drug products, there are no provisions in the law for FDA to "approve" dietary supplements for safety or effectiveness before they reach the consumer. Once a dietary supplement is marketed, FDA has to prove that the product is not safe in order to restrict its use or remove it from the market.

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 other dietary supplements and may contain ingredients not listed on the label. Do not assume anything with these products.

Please note. I am not saying all supplements are dangerous and manufacturers can't be trusted, that is not the case. There are some great products on the market which work and provide a value to consumers. However, you do not have to be an active competitor to realize you need to know what you are putting in your body and how it will react with other medications or other supplements.

My final words of caution are, “Be careful with the supplements you consume”!

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