

Dietary Supplements

[Dietary Supplements: What You Need to Know](#)

[Dietary Supplements for Exercise and Athletic Performance](#)

Performance supplements cannot substitute for a healthy diet, but some of them may have value, depending on the type and intensity of your activity. Other supplements don't seem to work, and a few might be harmful. Only a few dietary supplements have enough scientific evidence showing that they can improve certain types of exercise and athletic performance.

- In most cases, only adults should use performance supplements.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics, for example, states that performance supplements don't improve the abilities of teenage athletes beyond those that come from proper nutrition and training.

The FDA warns that some products marketed as dietary supplements to improve exercise and athletic performance might contain inappropriate, unlabeled, or unlawful stimulants, steroids, hormone-like ingredients, controlled substances, prescription medications, or unapproved drugs.

- Using these tainted products can cause health problems and disqualify athletes from competitions.

If you're thinking about taking a performance supplement, talk to your health care provider.

Before taking any dietary supplement, use the information sources listed above and talk to your health care providers to answer these questions:

- What are the potential benefits for me?
- Does it have any safety risks?
- What is the proper dose to take?
- How, when, and for how long should I take supplements?