



POSITION STATEMENT

Dietary Supplements for Sports Nutrition & Performance

CRN supports the use of dietary supplements as part of a healthy training program. CRN member companies are committed to ensuring high quality, safe and beneficial products supported by sound science:

- Scientific research using the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) data to assess the health and nutritional status of adults and children in the United States repeatedly demonstrates that Americans do not get all the essential nutrients we need. Although in an ideal world, everyone would eat a perfect diet to get their recommended intakes, the reality is most individuals don't. Dietary supplements, such as multivitamins, can fill the gap.
- Consulting with a team trainer, dietitian or other healthcare practitioner may be useful to help athletes determine which dietary supplements are right for them. Athletes—from weekend warriors and high school sports teams to professional athletes and elite Olympians—may need more nutrients than the average person in order to maintain adequate nutritional status because they expend more energy and need the added fuel to keep their bodies running at optimal pace. Dietary supplements—like multivitamins, protein powders, omega-3 fish oils, and more—provide a convenient and sensible way to help ensure athletes get the nutrients they need for support and recovery.
- Dietary supplements should not be used as a shortcut to achieve peak performance; they are not substitutes for proper training or a good diet.
- Like all consumers, athletes [need to be savvy](#) in their selection of dietary supplements. There are a variety of popular national brands, many of which have been certified by a third-party organization, and some of which have been specifically certified for athletes, (such as NSF or USP), to verify their contents and manufacturing. Purchase products through reputable retailers, distributors or websites. If the marketer is a company you've never heard of, operates only from a P.O. Box, or doesn't maintain a credible website, all consumers (including athletes) should stay away.
- Similarly, if a product's claims sound too good to be true, or if they indicate that the product can treat or cure disease, it's best to avoid the product altogether—laws prohibit dietary supplements from making disease-related claims and require that advertising has credible scientific evidence to back up the claims. Additionally, athletes should be wary of products that make claims to improve athletic performance outside of nutritional and conditioning support and recovery. If the claim on a dietary supplement sounds similar to the effects of an anabolic steroid or stimulant, it should be avoided.
- Athletes should be familiar with current restrictions for what is permissible by their appropriate sports governing authority. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and professional sports leagues have different requirements. The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) are independent groups responsible for coordinating and monitoring the fight against doping in sport. WADA publishes a list of [prohibited substances](#) that may be a useful reference tool for athletes (www.wada-ama.org/). Athletes should keep in mind that completely legal products (both OTC medicines and dietary supplements) may be banned by their sport's governing body but may be purchased lawfully by other consumers. Some substances may have multiple common and scientific names. Tools are available for athletes to help them identify ingredients they should avoid. If you are unfamiliar with a substance on a label, do the research to make sure the substance is permissible for your sport.
- Parents should monitor the types of dietary supplements their children who play sports are consuming; question the appropriateness of each product for their child (this may be age dependent); and have the ultimate goal of instilling good nutrition habits among young athletes so they develop into healthy adults.