

DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS

Athletes want the “edge” in competition. Dietary supplements are often promoted as an easy way to get that edge. The best “supplement” to training, however, is a good diet that includes frequent meals with quality carbohydrates, lean protein, heart-healthy fats, and adequate fluids.

Some dietary supplements can help boost nutrient intake, allowing athletes to recover more quickly from a hard workout, or provide fuel and fluid needed during long endurance events. But how do you sort through the claims of the thousands of supplements on the market?

KNOW THE FACTS.....

- The FDA does not regulate dietary supplements. Which means there is no assurance of its purity and quality.
- The FDA has to prove that the supplement is “unsafe” before it can be forced off the market.
- Dietary Supplements have a “Supplements Facts” label, which is different from the Nutrition Facts label on food. The Supplements Facts labels will have with it a disclaimer: “This statement has not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent disease.”
- “Natural” does not mean healthy or safe.
- The product could be potentially harmful or cause you to test positive for a banned substance.
- Sport governing bodies (such as the NCAA, USADA, IOC) publish lists of banned substances, but do not provide a list of specific supplements that contain banned ingredients.
- Research the dietary supplement you are about to use and if it has been tested by reliable organizations such as NSF international (www.NSF.org), US Pharmacopia (www.USP.org) or Informed Choice (www.informed-choice.org).
- **ATHLETES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THAT THEY INGEST!!!**

Contact a Registered Dietitian (RD) who specializes in sports or a Board Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics (CSSD), for advice on choosing safe supplements and customizing a nutrition plan.