



DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS¹

- **ARE** Consumable products, such as liquids or tablets that contain a dietary ingredient (vitamins, minerals, herbs/botanicals, amino acids, enzymes, metabolites) intended to supplement the diet.
- **ARE NOT** Replacements for healthy eating and physical training.
- **ARE NOT** Treatment for a medical condition or a cure for an illness.

DID YOU KNOW?
Dietary supplements are a **HUGE** industry in the U.S.

Americans spend approximately **\$36.7 BILLION** per year on **SUPPLEMENTS**.²

Wondering WHY People Spend So Much On Supplements?

They believe supplements may help them achieve a certain result.



Are you thinking about taking supplements? Follow the three steps below first.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) DOES NOT STRICTLY REGULATE dietary supplements.



Products may not always do what they claim to do or may be unsafe. Supplements are often unnecessary because the same components can be found naturally in foods to help you achieve the results you desire.

1. Choose Food Over Supplements.

When it comes down to it, eating smart and healthy will give your body the nutrients it needs to achieve the results you want. A few common supplements and food alternatives are provided here.

What it Claims to Do?

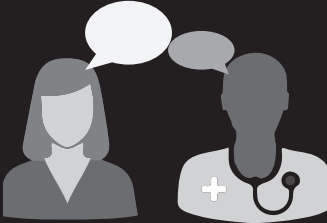
Eat This Instead

BCAA (Branched-Chain Amino Acids) ³	Quercetin ⁴	Omega-3 Fatty Acids ⁵	Creatine ⁶	Whey ⁷
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance exercise performance• Prevent fatigue• Reduce muscle breakdown• Improve recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Act as an antioxidant and anti-inflammatory• Prevent cancer• Improve heart health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve heart health• May reduce the risk of some cancers, depression, and neurological disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance muscle building and increase "bulk"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decrease muscle break down (high in BCAA)
Cottage cheese, fish/seafood, meat/poultry, nuts/seeds, dry whole lentils	Berries, apples, onions, broccoli, kale, red wine, tea	Salmon, herring, mackerel, walnuts, canola, olive, flaxseed, and soybean oils	Lean meat, poultry, fish	Skim milk, cottage cheese, ricotta cheese, yogurt

For more information on nutrition and how to eat to achieve optimal performance, check out [Performance Nutrition 101](#).

2. Talk to Your Health Care Provider.

Always speak with a health care provider before taking a new supplement. Be prepared to talk about the following:



Existing conditions and medical history



Potential medication interactions



Dosing recommendations



Possible safety concerns



Food and exercise alternatives

3. BUY SMART.

Product claims may not always be 100% truthful. Do your research and seek information from trustworthy sources before you buy.

- **Read the label.** Make sure the package has a label and it includes required information.
- **Watch for false or misleading claims.** Labels like "natural" or "herbal" don't mean the supplement is safe or works.
- **Know the risks.** There is no guarantee of quality, purity, safety, or effectiveness. [Operation Supplement Safety \(OPSS\) High-Risk Supplement List](#) provides a list of high-risk supplements to avoid.
- **Choose wisely.** Look for products with third-party verification programs, such as:
 - [United States Pharmacopeial Convention \(USP\)](#)
 - [NSF International](#)
 - [Informed-Choice](#)
 - [Banned Substances Control Group](#)
 - [ConsumerLab.com](#)
- **Be informed.** Just because a product is sold on a military installation does not mean it is a DoD-approved supplement. Check with your chain of command to determine if there is a local-level policy that impacts you and reference the following resources for more information about health, safety, and efficacy concerns:
 - [Navy and Marine Corps Force Health Protection Command \(NMCFHPC\) Nutrition Web Page](#)
 - [Dietary Supplements: Check the Label First](#)
 - [Dietary Supplements: Red Flags - What You Need to Know](#)
 - [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\) Office of Dietary Supplements Fact Sheets](#)
 - [Operation Supplement Safety](#)