

Dietary supplements could be bad for you

1st August, 2016



Millions of people around the world take dietary supplements in the belief that they will boost their health. New research casts doubt on the benefits of these pills and tablets. A new report from

the American organisation Consumer Reports (CR) found serious health risks from supplements that included vitamins, probiotics, and weight loss pills. CR said the biggest problem with supplements is that they are largely unregulated. While medicinal drugs have to be tested for safety and effectiveness, dietary supplements need far less government approval in many countries. This means that consumers are largely in the dark regarding the ingredients of the supplements and how the body will react to them.

Lisa Gill, an editor at CR, said the report showed how dangerous many supplements were. She said they could cause liver failure, kidney failure requiring kidney transplants, seizures, and heart problems. Gill added: "Just because it's not prescription, you say, 'oh, it's safe,' but that's not necessarily true." Gill urges consumers to avoid 15 ingredients commonly found in supplements, including red yeast and caffeine powder. She warned: "There have been deaths associated with each of these." She told people to seek medical help before taking supplements. She said: "Tell your doctor and your pharmacist what you're taking. Treat it like a medication. It's that important. It's really about your health."

Sources: CBSlocal.com / CBSnews.com / consumerreports.org

Writing

No one needs dietary supplements. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

millions / belief / boost / benefits / pills / weight loss / safety / consumers / react / editor / failure / heart problems / prescription / true / deaths / pharmacist / health

True / False

- The article says people take dietary supplements to boost their height. T / F
- Research casts doubt on whether or not supplements are good for us. T / F
- The biggest problem with supplements is the lack of regulation. T / F
- The article said its best to take supplements in the dark. T / F
- An editor said a report shows that supplements can cause kidney failure. T / F
- Things that don't need a prescription are not harmful to us. T / F
- The report lists 50 ingredients for us to avoid. T / F
- The editor said we treat supplements the same as medication. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. belief | a. improve |
| 2. boost | b. automatically |
| 3. doubt | c. hazardous |
| 4. effectiveness | d. respond |
| 5. react | e. deal with |
| 6. dangerous | f. uncertainty |
| 7. seizures | g. well-being |
| 8. necessarily | h. opinion |
| 9. treat | i. fits |
| 10. health | j. value |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think of taking vitamins and supplements?
- What are the dangers of supplements?
- Why don't people eat more healthily instead of taking supplements?
- How healthy is your diet?
- Why do people think they need supplements?
- What surprised you about what you read?
- Why aren't supplements more regulated?
- How much do you know about supplements?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. New research casts | a. what you're taking |
| 2. weight | b. the dark |
| 3. medicinal drugs have to be | c. true |
| 4. consumers are largely in | d. doubt on the benefits |
| 5. how the body will | e. to avoid 15 ingredients |
| 6. She said they could cause liver | f. tested for safety |
| 7. that's not necessarily | g. like a medication |
| 8. Gill urges consumers | h. loss pills |
| 9. Tell your doctor and your pharmacist | i. failure |
| 10. Treat it | j. react to them |

Discussion – Student B

- Has what you read changed your mind about supplements?
- How dangerous is it to take things without a prescription?
- How much do you trust medicines?
- Would you ask a doctor before taking supplements?
- What are the healthiest things you can eat?
- Do we really need supplements?
- How good are you at taking care of your health?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Spelling

- in the elfieb that they will
- casts tdbuo on the benefits
- imintvas, probiotics, and weight loss pills
- they are largely ungeldeutra
- ilncdieam drugs
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- deaths aiadctseos with each of these
- Tell your doctor and your acpitamhrs
- Treat it like a dancmioeti

Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. a	3. f	4. j	5. d
6. c	7. i	8. b	9. e	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Dietary supplements

You think taking dietary supplements is the best thing for our health. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so necessary about their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): no stress, exercise or sleep.

Role B – No stress

You think no stress is the best thing for our health. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so necessary about their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): dietary supplements, exercise or sleep.

Role C – Exercise

You think exercise is the best thing for our health. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so necessary about their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): no stress, dietary supplements or sleep.

Role D – Sleep

You think sleep is the best thing for our health. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so necessary about their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): no stress, exercise or dietary supplements.

Speaking – Well-being

Rank these with your partner. Put the best important things for our well-being at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| • dietary supplements | • exercise |
| • no stress | • good food |
| • money | • sleep |
| • happiness | • shelter |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.