



Athletes using supplements may lead to a positive test result due to the following:

1 Inaccurate labelling

The labelling of supplements is not strictly regulated. Intentionally or not, there is a possibility that not all of the ingredients are listed on the supplements labels and the undeclared ingredients may contain prohibited substances.

2 Contamination during production

Since the manufacturing of supplements is not strictly regulated, supplements may be contaminated with prohibited substances during production.

! Therefore, it is virtually impossible to confirm that a supplement does not contain any prohibited substances. Athletes should seriously assess the risk of using a supplement.



! **Strict Liability Principle**
According to the World Anti-Doping Code, athlete is responsible for any prohibited substance found in his or her body, no matter if the prohibited substance is used intentionally or not.

CONSIDERATIONS

Athletes should assess the following aspects when considering on the use of supplements:

! Health risks

There are always possible side effects when using supplements. Prolonged use may lead to adverse health effects or even addiction. Supplements that claimed to be “all natural” may contain active ingredients that interact with each other or with medications.

Effectiveness of a supplement

Supplements advertisements tend to rely on unproven research results and celebrity’s endorsement, instead of valid scientific evidence to promote their products. Benefits of a supplement maybe very specific to certain situations and to certain individuals only. Therefore, claims made by supplements may not be true or reliable.

? Inadvertent doping

Under the Strict Liability Principle, an Anti-Doping Rule Violation (ADRV) is committed if a prohibited substance (or its metabolites or markers) is found in an athlete’s sample. Inadvertent doping due to the use of a poorly labelled supplement is not an adequate defense in a doping case. Sanctions for an ADRV may include ineligible to participate in sport-related activities and disqualification of competition results, etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS

↑ Athletes could enhance their performance through the following means which are safer and more reliable:



Scientific training programmes



Good dietary practice



Regular monitoring



Relaxation techniques

⊘ Athletes should actively avoid using high-risk supplements such as muscle-building, weight-loss and sexual enhancement products.

✓ Athletes should consult medical and sport professionals before considering the use of any supplements.

! Athletes should seriously consider not using any supplements.

Disclaimer:
This pamphlet is published for reference purpose only, and is not intended to give any legal/medical advice by ADOHK who shall disclaim any liability arising therefrom. Relevant individuals are recommended to refer to the Anti-Doping Rules of ADOHK, and seek for professional/legal advice on important decisions.



ANTI-DOPING ORGANIZATION OF HONG KONG, CHINA



✉ antidoping@antidoping.hk www.antidoping.hk
📺 [HKAntiDoping](#) [f](#) [Anti-Doping Organization of Hong Kong, China](#)

Revised in April 2023
Copyright © 2023 Anti-Doping Organization of Hong Kong, China Limited