



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

### 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:

### 1 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.

### 2 Effectiveness of a supplement

Supplements advertisements tend to rely on unproven research results or celebrities 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.

### 3 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.

## Recommendations

- Athletes could enhance their performance through the following means which are safer and more reliable:
  - scientific training programmes
  - good dietary practice
  - relaxation techniques
  - regular monitoring
- 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.

### Note!

**Athletes should seriously consider not to use any supplements.**

## Hong Kong Anti-Doping Committee

 [antidoping@hkolympic.org](mailto:antidoping@hkolympic.org)

 [www.antidoping.hk](http://www.antidoping.hk)

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