Risks and Implications of Consuming Dietary and Nutritional Supplements

Dietary and nutritional supplements are common in sport, but the effectiveness of most of them is questionable.

When athletes consume nutritional supplements, they expect faster adjustment to training, reduction of recovery time, providing energy for the body, enhancing sport performance. Only insignificant number of dietary and nutritional supplements used by athletes, are effective, which is proved by solid scientific data, and most additives are hazardous for health and contain doping.

If there is a well-identified lack of some vitamin or mineral in the body, and for some reason, there is no possibility to replenish it via nutrition, dietary and nutritional supplements can become a short-term mode of replacing the shortage, but they are unable to solve the problem of poor nutrition. Many athletes negligently consume dietary and nutritional supplements above the acceptable doses, they blindly trust advertising which guarantees 100 percent beneficial outcome without any side effects. Such an irresponsible attitude can result in disastrous consequences for health and sport career.

The World Anti-Doping Agency pays special attention to the use of dietary and nutritional supplements by athletes because in many countries, governments do not duly regulate the production of dietary and nutritional supplements. This means that the ingredients of the product may be different from the ingredients indicated on its label. In some cases, the substances which are present, but are not indicated on the label, can be substances prohibited pursuant to anti-doping rules. A significant part of positive doping control tests results from consuming low quality dietary and nutritional supplements.

WADA is concerned that many athletes intend to consume dietary and nutritional supplements without having sufficient knowledge about the benefits of the product, and also about the presence of prohibited substances in the product. The low quality of consumed dietary and nutritional supplement does not serve as justification when cases about the presence of doping detection are reviewed. Athletes must remember that dietary and nutritional supplements may contain hazardous substances, and also about the principle of full responsibility of the athlete.

When consuming dietary and nutritional supplements, athletes who undergo doping control within the framework of national and international testing programs, should take extreme care. Some dietary and nutritional supplements are manufactured under the conditions of poor sanitation, many supplements contain toxins which cause gastrointestinal disorders. Other supplements may not contain a part of indicated ingredients (which are the most expensive, as a rule). Often, anabolic steroids, performance-enhancing drugs and other substances prohibited in sport, are added in dietary and nutritional supplements. Reportedly, 25 percent of dietary and nutritional supplements may have a positive doping test result. And prohibited substances are often not indicated on the label, for this reason neither an athlete, nor medical personnel can suspect that prohibited substances are present.

As of today, there are no dietary and nutritional supplements with 100 percent guarantee of being clean. One can be completely sure that his/her body is clean only if he/she completely refrains from consuming dietary and nutritional supplements, but in modern sport, observation of such a condition is uncommon.

Before deciding to consume a certain dietary and nutritional supplement, a responsible athlete will check first if it is really necessary for him/her, and it does not bear the risk for health and sport career. Dietary and nutritional supplements should be consumed in accordance with the sport doctor’s advice on the
basis of the data of medical examination. After deciding on consuming dietary and nutritional supplements, products made by manufacturers, who have a solid reputation and use high quality equipment, such as globally recognized international pharmaceutical companies, should be used. It is necessary to bear in mind that 80 percent of sport nutrition products in the Russian market are fakes, which can contain substances prohibited in sport. Purchasing sport nutrition products online should be done with a special care.

An athlete must be aware of the existence of anti-doping rules which hold the athlete responsible for everything which got into his body. Ignorance of the rules is no excuse for the athlete for a positive doping control test.

Consumption of dietary and nutritional supplements is permissible after consulting a sport doctor. If one has any doubts about the safety of dietary and nutritional supplements, one should not consume them.

Please note!

Dietary and nutritional supplements cannot be considered as a universal product, which one can use on his/her own, without consulting with a doctor. It may be dangerous for health and for sport career.

Source: http://www.rusada.ru/sportsman/documents/forbidden/bad