

Example of dietary supplements essay

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Dietary supplements are orally taken products that contain certain dietary ingredients as specified by the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act that are intended to supplement diets that contain these ingredients (Dwyer et al, 2005). The products in this category exclude tobacco and are marketed in forms such as tablets and capsules. The ingredients include vitamins, minerals, herbs or other botanicals, amino acids, and other dietary substances and extracts.

Dietary supplements have significant benefits to users. According to Dwyer et al (2005), a major benefit of dietary supplements is that they present an opportunity to individuals to improve their health in cases where they may be exposed to inadequate nutrient intake. This could be due to poverty, inappropriate food selection or depression. Dietary supplements are therefore important in achieving nutrient adequacy. Dietary supplements can also be used to stimulate weight loss. Although Dwyer et al (2005) observed that there is scanty scientific evidence on this claim; there are multiple supplements in the market aimed at stimulating weight loss. Dietary supplements are also useful to athletes and other individuals who engage in similar activities in improving performance besides general health.

There are a number of risks associated with taking dietary supplements. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) noted that they can interact with other medication that a person might be taking. For instance, calcium would interfere with certain heart medications if taken concurrently. Another risk related to dietary supplements regards the dosage. If taken in excess, a dosage can have serious side effects such as headaches and liver damage for the case of vitamin, or impaired muscle due to a buildup of calcium

deposits.

The government's regulation of dietary supplements revolves around safety of the products before and even after they are introduced to the market rather than their effectiveness. Cite observed that the government does not approve these supplements on the basis of effectiveness, but only reviews new ingredients for safety prior to marketing through its agency, the FDA. The FDA can also ban products from the market if it determines that they are unsafe, have been adulterated or have misleading claims. DSHEA stipulates various regulatory guidelines on dietary supplements.

Dietary supplements are used to treat and manage obesity in two different ways: they are used to provide important nutrients that may be absent in calorie-restricted diets; and they stimulate weight loss. Multiple dietary supplements are used for managing obesity (Dwyer et al, 2005). Bitter Orange has been widely marketed as a dietary supplement for weight loss. Bitter Orange contains chemicals that alter the functioning of organs in various ways. When taken, some of the components can increase blood pressure as well as the activity rate of some organs such as the heart. Consequently, the body uses more energy than in a normal condition. For this reason, Bitter Orange is used to treat obesity and manage weight by stimulating weight loss. Primarily, this dietary supplement contains synerphrine and the product's daily recommended dosage is between 4-6 grams (Blumenthal, 2005, p. 4). There is little evidence on the efficacy of this dietary supplement in managing weight loss or treating obesity and equally scanty data regarding concerns that have been raised regarding the product (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, 2007). The

fact that this product contains substances that speed up the heart rate and raise blood pressure renders it unsafe for use as dietary supplements.

References

Blumenthal, M. (2005). Bitter Orange Peel and Synerprine. American Botanical Council.

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