

# Nutrition News & Notes



## Choosing The Right Dietary Supplements To Ensure Good Health

(NAPSA)—Interested in the health benefits of natural supplements but not sure which are right for you? You're not alone. Supplement choices can sometimes cause people seeking healthy choices an unwelcome malady: anxiety.

Today, many Americans are turning to supplements to help manage a range of health conditions that include lack of energy, menopause and joint health. In fact, one in four Americans use herbs and other natural supplements regularly to stave off a specific health issue, manage a health condition or simply just feel better.

Yet many consumers remain confused by often-conflicting research and the assortment of products on store shelves. That's unfortunate, say experts, as anyone seeking the benefits of a supplement should be well-informed about the product and its ingredients in order to make the best purchase for his or her specific needs.

A panel of health experts, gathered recently in Santa Monica for the Nutrition and Wellness Symposium 2002, stressed the importance of educating consumers to help them choose safe and effective supplements.

The symposium, sponsored by the Pharmaton Institute for Wellness, featured health profession-

**...anyone seeking the benefits of a supplement should be well-informed about the product and its ingredients in order to make the best purchase for his or her specific needs**



als from the Council for Responsible Nutrition and the American Dietetic Association's Nutrition in Complementary Care Dietetic Practice Group.

"Health-conscious consumers—and those who want to be—need help navigating the natural supplement aisle," according to Leslie Beck, a registered dietitian and featured speaker at the symposium.

"They also need guidance in choosing a high-quality brand. Not all supplements are alike, and not all live up to the same high standards," adds Beck, author of Leslie Beck's *Nutrition Encyclopedia*.

So whether it's Ginkgo biloba, ginseng or garlic, here are a few tips to keep in mind when choosing a dietary supplement:

Look for Clinical Studies. Not all supplements have been tested. Be sure to choose a brand that has been proven safe and effective in controlled clinical studies.

Call the manufacturer's 800 number or visit their Web site to obtain clinical studies that support the product.

Read labeling carefully. Like many prescription medications, dietary supplements may have precautions regarding potential interactions or may not be appropriate for some people. Be sure to read labeling carefully and check with your doctor if you have specific questions.

Supplements should be taken daily, or as otherwise directed, as part of an ongoing health regimen. As supplements work gradually, allow ample time to begin feeling their benefits.

Choose supplements that are standardized. Standardization refers to the manufacturing process that assures that the supplement provides a consistent amount of the active component from dose to dose. That consistency means that you will always get what you pay for.

Are natural supplements right for you?

Nutritionists and dietitians are a good first stop when seeking credible and reliable information, says Beck. In addition, she recommends that individuals consider speaking with their physician, pharmacist or other healthcare professional.

For more information, visit [www.Pharmaton.com](http://www.Pharmaton.com)