

# NEWS OF SPORTS

## Playing It Safe With Supplements

(NAPSA)—Doing your homework before starting or combining any new supplements could help you stay in the game later on.

Here are a few tips to help:

- Learn the risks. Some nutritional supplements may contain unlisted ingredients or banned substances that can potentially disqualify students from sports competitions.

“There are risks associated with dietary supplements leading to athletes testing positive. In many cases, poor manufacturing and cross-contamination can be a root cause for trace levels of an undeclared banned substance finding its way into a supplement,” said Ed Wyszumiala, general manager at NSF International, which certifies dietary supplements and other nutritional products.

Student athletes should not take products that increase testosterone or growth hormone levels, which are already high in most teens. Teens should also watch out for stimulants such as caffeine, ephedra or synephrine, as taking such stimulants could lead to restlessness, anxiety, racing heart or an irregular heartbeat. Stimulants could also increase the chance of having a life-threatening side effect.

Mixing supplements or taking them at a higher-than-recommended dose can also cause problems.

- Choose certified products. Even reading a label thoroughly may not provide all the information you need as dietary supplements may not be tested before they are sold to consumers.

NSF International has the only certification program for dietary supplements, which ensures that the products contain the ingredi-



**Certification ensures that supplements don't contain unlisted ingredients or potentially harmful levels of impurities.**

ents and quantities shown on the label, and do not contain any unlisted ingredients or harmful impurities.

Additional testing under the NSF Certified for Sport program helps confirm that the product does not contain substances banned by many major athletic organizations, including the MLB, NFL, the NCAA and Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport.

“One area that we have recently seen as problematic relates to compounds that are designed to mimic a banned substance,” said Wyszumiala. “Their similar structure could potentially lead to a positive doping result.”

- Talk to your health care provider. Before taking any supplement, you may want to discuss it with your health care provider.

Student athletes have to consider what is at stake when choosing a dietary supplement, especially with the history of adulteration and contamination that has been reported.

At the end of the day, the only person who is responsible for taking a product is the person who ingests it.

For more information, call (800) 673-8010 or visit [nsfsport.com](http://nsfsport.com).