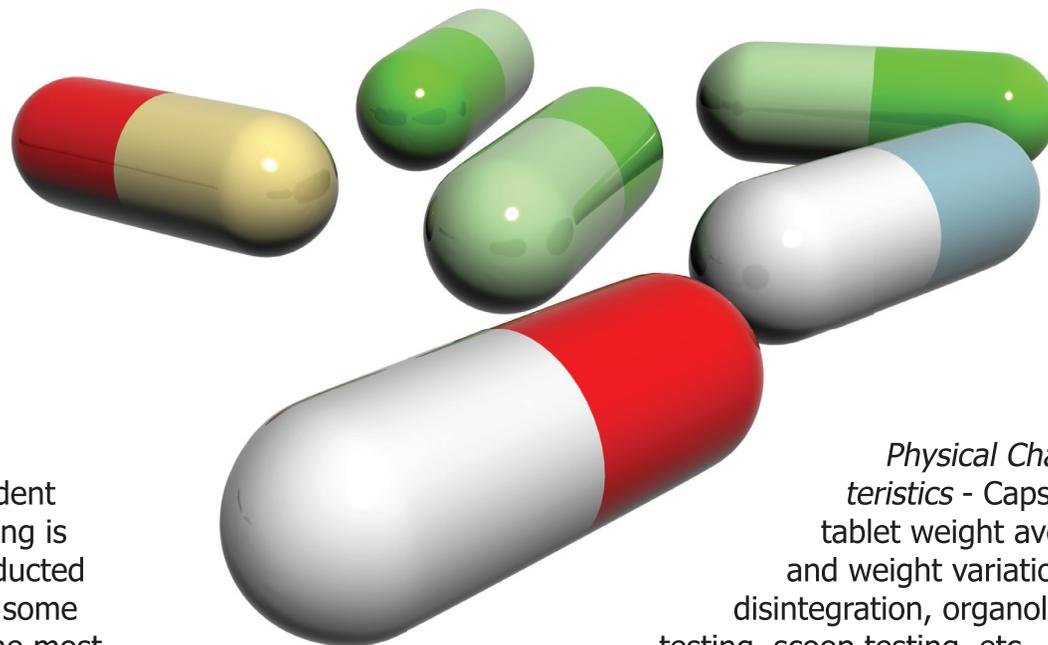


Choosing the Right Supplements



To use or not to use supplements is not the question. It has been well established that our standard American diet lacks nutritional density and even if we adhere to cleaner eating, we have gut wall integrity issues that limit absorption of the nutritional value. This argument will be saved for a future article. At present the greater concern is when using supplementation, how do we choose the RIGHT product.

I would like to propose to you that even if you pay \$1.00 for a supplement, it could be the most expensive supplement you will ever purchase. According to the Attorney General's office in a report dated February 3, 2015 AG.NY.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-asks-major-retailers-halt-sales-certain-herbal-supplements-dna-tests, it could cost you your health, the very thing you were attempting to preserve.

When choosing your product, you should be aware of the company who produces the product and ask these questions:

1. Are the raw materials used in your product tested and how?

As required by FDA GMP's (Good Manufacturing Practices labeling standards), each and every raw material must be tested for identity. Identity testing is simply confirming that the raw material is indeed what it says it is on the raw material's labeling. Many different identity testing options are available, some of which include Fourier Transform Infrared Spectrometers (FTIR) or Thin Layer Chromatography (TLC). Third party inde-

pendent testing is conducted and some of the most reputable labs in the industry for the identification of botanical ingredients are Alkemist Labs and Advanced Botanical Consulting & Testing.

In addition to finished product Certificates of Analyses (COAs), you should request COAs on raw material identity testing for any raw material in a given finished product lot.

2. How are your nutraceutical companies assuring purity, strength and composition?

Label Claim Verification - Each active ingredient is verified to be no less than 100% of the amount claimed on the label.

Microorganisms - Must meet United States Pharmacopeia (USP), American Herbal Products Association (AHPA), and/or National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) acceptance criteria for dietary supplements.

Heavy Metals - Most products are required to meet USP acceptance criteria for dietary supplements. Where feasible, others must meet California's Proposition 65 safe harbor levels.

Physical Characteristics - Capsule/tablet weight average and weight variation, disintegration, organoleptic testing, scoop testing, etc.

Reasonably Anticipated Contaminants - In certain finished products, reputable companies will test for contaminants that have a slight possibility of ending up in the product.

Unfortunately, this level of testing is not the norm in the industry. Your decision to strategically use supplementation to assist you to reach your health goals is a good one. However, you must be an informed consumer, and beyond the choices you must make to determine what is best for you in overall nutrition, you must now look way beyond the label and identify how the companies you choose to purchase from are safeguarding you. When there is a lack of transparency and communication, it should make you think twice about who you are doing business with.

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