

Dietary Supplements



11/14/2019 - The use of dietary supplements in the United States has continued to rise despite concerns regarding their safety and effectiveness. A study featured in the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics* found that adults were "two and a half times more likely" to use dietary supplements while taking prescription medication compared to adults without a diagnosed medical condition.

While the use of supplements may be warranted when nutrient intake is lacking from dietary sources or for certain health conditions, there is a lack of evidence supporting micronutrient supplementation for chronic disease prevention, according to the "Position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Micronutrient Supplementation". The expertise of the registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) is needed to help educate consumers on the safe and appropriate use of dietary supplements, and the Academy's updated Position Paper addresses "How to Discuss Use of Supplements with Clients and Patients". It also identifies the roles and responsibilities of the RDN and the Nutrition and Dietetics Technician Registered (NDTR) under the supervision of the RDN and their application based on a practitioner's individual scope of practice.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provides additional resources relating to dietary supplements including, the National Institutes of Health's "Dietary Supplement Label Database (DSLDB)" and its Office of Dietary Supplements, both of which are available to health care professionals and the public. In addition, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which is charged with the oversight of dietary supplements as a result of the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) has recently proposed modernizing their regulation and initiated a "Dietary Supplement

Ingredient Advisory List” in order to quickly inform the public of ingredients that are not approved for use in supplements. In addition to staying informed of research and regulations relating to dietary supplements, the “**Guidelines Regarding the Recommendation and Sale of Dietary Supplements**” should also be considered.

As the nutrition experts, RDNs must be prepared to address consumer inquiries regarding supplementation and can help their patients/clients sort out the conflicting and confusing information concerning dietary supplement use.

References

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