

Ephedra

A Dietary Supplement

Do you know the Dangers?

A 15-year old girl collapsed while playing soccer, then died three days later. She had been taking a dietary supplement with ephedra to boost athletic performance. Ephedra may be one of the ingredients in dietary supplements to aid in weight loss.

Dangerous Combination

Some examples of supplements that contain ephedra are: Metabolife, Meta-lite, and Slacker 2. These products also contain caffeine. Caffeine, in combination with ephedra, increases blood pressure, heart rate irregularities, insomnia, tremors, seizures, heart attacks, and strokes. There have been 35 deaths attributed to supplements and teas containing ephedra.

What is being done?

The FDA has proposed regulations that would limit the amount of ephedra (ephedrine alkaloid) to less than 8 milligrams per dose in a product and would not allow combination products containing caffeine and other central nervous stimulants. Consumers should not take more than 24 milligrams of ephedra per day.

Adapted from

-Environmental Nutrition, August 1999

-National Nutritional Food Association website, April 1998.

-Tyler's Herbs of Choice, JE



Oakland County Health Division will not deny participation in its programs based on race, sex, religion, national origin, age or disability. State and Federal eligibility requirements apply for certain programs.

Source: Oakland County Health Division – Nutrition Unit, 7/00