



Dietary Supplements – Q & A

- ▶ ***Can dietary supplements help older consumers?*** As we age, our nutritional needs may change. Informed food choices are the first place to start, making sure you get a variety of foods while watching your calorie intake. Supplements may also help you get appropriate amounts of nutrients.
- ▶ ***What are the risks to older consumers when taking supplements?*** Taking prescription medicines, preparing for surgery or taking large amounts of supplements could cause problems.
- ▶ ***Why speak to a Health Care Provider about supplements?*** Your doctor and other members of your health team monitor your medical condition and overall health and have access to the most current research. Some supplements may be harmful to your medical condition or interact with your medication.
- ▶ ***How can I spot false claims?*** Be savvy! Although the benefits of some dietary supplements have been documented, the claims of others may be unproven. If something sounds too good to be true, it usually is.
- ▶ ***Who is responsible for ensuring the safety and efficacy of supplements?*** Under the law, manufacturers of dietary supplements are responsible for making sure their products are safe before they go to market. If you want to know more about the product you are purchasing, check with the manufacturer to find out if they can supply information to support the claims for their products.
- ▶ ***What's the bottom line?*** Dietary supplements are intended to supplement the diet, not to cure, prevent, or treat diseases or replace the variety of foods important to a healthful diet. Do not self-diagnose any health condition. Together, you and your healthcare team can make the best decision for optimal health.

