

## Supplements



### Assess the need, assess the risk

Extreme caution is recommended regarding supplement use.

The use of dietary supplements by athletes is a concern because in many countries the manufacturing and labeling of supplements may not follow strict rules, which may lead to a supplement containing an undeclared substance that is prohibited under anti-doping regulations. A significant number of positive tests have been attributed to the misuse of supplements and taking a poorly labeled dietary supplement is not an adequate defense in a doping hearing. As the supplement industry is difficult to regulate, no guarantee can be given that any supplement, including vitamins and minerals and herbal remedies, is free from prohibited substances.

UK Anti-Doping advises you to assess the need for the supplement itself, and assess the risk that the supplement contains a prohibited substance. It is important you take as many precautions as possible if you are using supplements and nutritional products.

HFL Sport Science manages the [Informed Sport programme](#) which offers a risk minimisation scheme for supplements.

[www.informed-sport.com](http://www.informed-sport.com)

This can help reduce the risk of contaminated supplements but it is no guarantee. If you choose to take supplements, it is important that when using the Informed Sport programme, you only buy from a batch that has been tested by them. However, please note that this still does not guarantee a supplement is completely free from prohibited substances as there can even be differences in ingredients within the one batch.

There are some important issues to note:

- The Informed Sport programme is not able to test for all substances on the Prohibited List. Athletes, who take substances which have not been tested for by Informed Sport, do so at their own risk
- Supplements are batch tested. In batch testing, the amount of product actually analysed is a small proportion of the whole batch that is manufactured. Just because one sample does not test positive for a prohibited substance, there is no guarantee that the entire product is 'clean'. It is possible to get a variation in the levels of contamination both between separate manufacturing batches and even within a batch itself.

Further nutritional information and advice is available from the [English Institute of Sport](#).