

Ensuring quality dietary supplements



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Consumers rely on supplements for their health

3 out of 4



Americans take dietary supplements

2 out of 3



consumers rely on healthcare practitioners' recommendations when choosing a supplement

8 out of 10



physicians recommend supplements to their patients

The reasons individuals take supplements are varied, almost all involve a desire for improved health. Although it may seem obvious, their health outcomes may depend on the quality of the products they take.

Unfortunately, not all dietary supplements are quality products. With the booming dietary supplements market and the growing number of supplement options available, it can be challenging to know which products to trust.

Healthcare practitioners can support patients in making informed health decisions. Two out of three consumers rely on healthcare practitioners' recommendations when choosing a supplement. Supplements that have been third party verified make quality visible, ensuring what's on the label is in the bottle.

Public quality standards help build trust in dietary supplements, but what do we mean by "quality?" It can best be broken down into 4 P's

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Positive identification

Reports have shown there are products on the market that do not contain the ingredients advertised on the label.

Potency

Not only should the ingredients be present, it is important that they are present in the right amount. Too little and it may have no effect on consumers' health, too much and it may harm consumers. Dosage is especially important for children whose small bodies can be easily impacted by too much of a given ingredient—like iron, melatonin, or vitamin D.

Purity

It is important to confirm that supplements do not contain unwanted ingredients, especially those that can have a negative effect on health.

Performance

If a supplement does not dissolve, the ingredients it contains cannot be absorbed by the body. In that case, it is more likely to pass right through the consumer's system without any effect on their health.

Examples of unwanted ingredients may include:

- Heavy metals (e.g., lead)
- Chemicals from pesticides that may have been used on plants
- Toxins like mold or mildew
- Intentional adulterants like active pharmaceutical ingredients

Reference

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Prenatal vitamins and public health impact

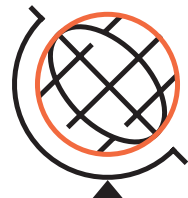


This spotlight is brought to you in partnership with Vitamin Angels, a global public health organization working toward ending malnutrition worldwide by distributing life-changing vitamins and minerals to at-risk mothers and children under five in the U.S. and around the world.

Poor prenatal nutrition contributes to global health risks

>80% of the 7,000

newborn deaths that happen every day around the world are preventable; proper prenatal nutrition and supplementation play a key role in preventing newborn deaths and ensuring positive pregnancy outcomes



30%

of pregnant women in the U.S. do not take a multivitamin, leaving them more vulnerable to the risk of dietary inadequacies



38%

of pregnant woman worldwide are anemic; for babies of anemic moms, prenatal multivitamins can reduce the risk of early death by

29%



3,000

pregnancies are affected by neural tube defects (NTDs) in the U.S. every year; folic acid supplementation before and during pregnancy may help prevent NTDs by

70%



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Ensuring the quality of prenatal vitamins

For pregnant women, it can be difficult to meet the daily intake recommendations for nutrients. Taking prenatal vitamins may be important, but prenatal vitamins are not always quality assured. Potential benefits cannot be realized without the underpinning quality attributes of identity, potency, and purity. That is why third party verification of supplements through independent testing is helpful to ensure that what is on the label is in the bottle in the declared strengths and amounts, without undesirable levels of contaminants.

“Every woman, regardless of income or where she lives, deserves access to quality prenatal supplements during her pregnancy. We can all work together to contribute to this effort and help ensure the quality and safety of these supplements. That is why we work with the USP Verification program.”

Spencer F. Kirk, Managing Director, Kirk Humanitarian

Upholding a higher bar

A study on heavy metal contamination of prenatal vitamins, published in 2018 from Toxicology Reports, recommends guidelines be established for the maximum acceptable levels of cumulative exposure of toxic agents. Until those guidelines are set, choosing third party verified products may help reduce harmful levels of specified contaminants.

“Scientific evidence shows that pregnant women who take prenatal multivitamins will reduce the risk of poor nutrition and will reduce the risk of poor birth outcomes among their children. It’s important to ensure that the prenatal multivitamins provided to women are high quality and do not contain harmful levels of contaminants, which is why Vitamin Angels partners with USP to provide independent third party testing and verification of our product.”

Howard Schiffer, Vitamin Angels Founder and President

References

- Gundacker, C. et al. (2012, May). The role of the placenta in fetal exposure to heavy metals. *Wien Med Wochenschr*. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22717874>.
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Trust supplements with the USP Verified Mark



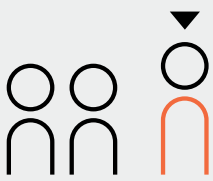
Keeping quality top of mind when recommending supplements to your patients

Trust in quality

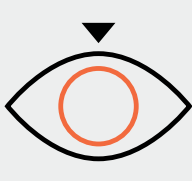
Product quality is the leading buying consideration for consumers

✗ But, only **17%** of dietary supplements use a USP public quality standard, if any standard at all


When it comes to dietary supplements, **consumers value independent third-party oversight** because it:



Is independent, meaning free from bias



Shows a commitment to transparency and social responsibility



Ensures quality of ingredients and manufacturing processes


If it's USP Verified,
patients can trust the quality of the supplements you recommend

The USP Dietary Supplement Verification Program builds trust in the quality of supplement products by:




- 1 Auditing**
of manufacturing sites for GMP (Good Manufacturing Practices) compliance
- 2 Reviewing**
quality control and manufacturing product documentation
- 3 Testing**
of product samples in laboratories
- 4 Monitoring**
annually with GMP audits, product reports, and product testing


If it's USP Verified,
patients can trust what is on the label is what is in the bottle




Positive Identification
The product is what it says it is



Potency
The product's ingredients are present in the right amount, not too much nor too little



Performance
The product will break down in the body and be absorbed as intended



Purity
The product does not contain harmful levels of contaminants

▶ 200 years of building trust in medicines, supplements, and foods by setting standards that help ensure **quality and safety**

▶ 100+ dietary supplement formulas with the **USP Verified Mark** making quality visible on **880 million+ labels**



References

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No doubt about it

Trust the USP Verified Mark when recommending supplements to your patients. It means that what is in the bottle has been independently tested for the ingredients on the label in the declared strength and amounts.

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Making Kenny smile, it's about the perfect thing



This spotlight is brought to you by Vitamin Angels, a global public health organization working toward ending malnutrition worldwide by distributing life-changing vitamins and minerals to at-risk mothers and children under five in the U.S. and around the world.



Ana, mother of two from Iowa, looked down at her 7-month-old son with love. Kenny was quick to share a big smile with his mom. While sometimes the birth of a second child can create tension with older siblings, Ana said that her three-year-old daughter whole-heartedly embraces Kenny. "She wasn't jealous when he was born, she was very protective. She loves him. She plays with him a lot, and wants to do everything for him, [like] changing his diaper. She can't, but she tries!"

When Ana became pregnant with her first child three years ago, she was unsure where to go to receive prenatal healthcare. Her sister took her to the local Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) office and helped her make an appointment. At Ana's first appointment, she was offered Vitamin Angels prenatal multivitamins by the nurse. "I took some, and I have liked those since then. When I found out I was pregnant with him [Kenny], I'm like well, 'I gotta go to WIC, and get some vitamins!'"

As she has watched each of her children grow healthy and happy, she can't help but share with other moms about Vitamin Angels' prenats. "I see my friends get pregnant, I'm like go to WIC! Come in, the vitamins work! I don't like buying anything without asking somebody who has taken them. [Vitamin Angels prenats are] good, and they're safe. They're tiny, and they're easy to take. So, I recommend those a lot!"

Many low-income families, and those who are un-insured or under-insured, face barriers to access for healthcare. Word of mouth can play a huge role in encouraging women to seek out the care they need. The confidence that comes with receiving the recommendation from a trusted source can have life-changing effects.

Ana proudly shared that Kenny is in good health and meeting all of his milestones; he's babbling, getting better at using his fingers, rolling over, and sitting up. It was clear just how much Ana loved being a mom. "I get to spend all my time with them," she said. "They're just great. I love them."

Reference

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