



## **Buyer Beware: “Ironing Out” the Facts on Choosing Vitamins and Supplements**

According to a recent Harris Poll conducted on behalf of the American Osteopathic Association, more than four in five Americans (86 percent) take vitamins or supplements. Further, iron deficiency is the single most common nutritional deficiency worldwide. While the supplement industry, especially for iron, is booming, surprisingly, it remains largely unregulated. Dietary supplements are classified as food products, not medicines, so they aren't regulated by the strict standards governing the sale of prescription and over-the-counter drugs. Unlike drug products that must be proven safe and effective for their intended use before marketing, there are no provisions in the law for FDA to "approve" dietary supplements for safety or effectiveness before they reach the consumer.

While the FDA requires supplement manufacturers to follow good manufacturing processes, it does not test the effectiveness, safety, or quality of supplements or their ingredients. With this in mind, it can be very difficult for consumers to determine which supplements are effective and made from high-quality ingredients and which are either a waste of money or, worse, potentially harmful.

At NovaFerrum, we believe educated and informed consumers will be our best customers, so we've created this supplement primer to help you make the best choices for you and your family.

### **Know what's in it and what isn't**

- Look for products from manufacturers who are registered with the FDA and NSF certified to ensure that a third party has tested supplements to ensure that they contain what's listed on the label in the amount indicated, are free of contaminants and are standardized batch-to-batch.

### **Pay attention to sourcing and manufacturing**

- Where it comes from is almost as important as what's in it. Manufacturers can cut corners in terms of working with lower-quality global suppliers or manufacturing products in places that require even less oversight than the United States. You should know where your supplements come from and where and how they are made. NovaFerrum products are proudly sourced and manufactured in the United States, ensuring the highest levels of quality

### **Look for possible reactions or interactions**

- Vitamins and supplements are chemicals and should be treated that way. Many supplements, especially herbs and botanicals, can interact badly with one another and/or with prescription medications.

### **Dosage matters**

- There is wide variation in the amount of active ingredients in each supplement. Some widely available iron supplements, for example, contain only slightly more iron than the amount included in a glass of tap water. Make sure you get what you're paying for.
- Overdosing is also potentially dangerous. Taking vitamins and minerals in too high a dosage can become toxic over time. It's important to know what the Tolerable Upper Intake Level or UL (the maximum amount you can take without negative side effects) is for each supplement you are taking to ensure that you are not taking too much.
- Iron dosing is especially urgent. Iron supplements can be harmful or even fatal if an overdose occurs. Iron poisoning typically occurs from ingestion of excess iron that results in acute toxicity. Accidental overdose of iron-containing products is a leading cause of fatal poisoning in children under the age of six.

### **Consider dietary concerns**

Don't be fooled by claims of products being vegan or gluten-free; Be sure they are certified and verified through independent testing.

- Gluten-free - When you see the "certified gluten-free" symbol on a food package, it means the manufacturer has followed stringent steps to prevent gluten cross-contamination and that the food has been independently tested by a third party for the presence of gluten. As one of the criteria for using the claim "gluten-free," FDA set a limit of less than 20 ppm (parts per million) for the unavoidable presence of gluten in foods that carry this label, while the [Gluten-Free Certification Organization \(GFCO\) program has much stricter threshold of 10 ppm \(parts per million\)](#).
- Vegan. Kosher and Etimad Halal – Similarly, many products are listed as vegan/kosher/halal, but smart consumers know to look for those that are vegan-verified and Etimad Halal or Kosher certified.

### **All-natural isn't always better**

- It's also important to note while organic is a good thing when you buy your vegetables when it comes to products that require a shelf-life, this approach may not be the best alternative. There are some popular supplement products that have been recalled due to bacterial contamination. This likely would not have occurred had there have been a proper preservative in place serving as an anti-microbial. Without some level of preservative, harmful bacteria can and will grow in liquid supplements.
- Because your family's health is paramount to us, NovaFerrum products are made with natural fruit extracts, flavors and sweeteners, and we've taken the extra precaution to include a small amount of a preservative to maintain the stability of the product and minimize the risk of contamination.

### **Research lawsuits and recalls**

- As mentioned above, the supplement industry has experienced a number of lawsuits and recalls for issues related to lack of proper preservatives making children sick, ineffectiveness, adverse reactions, and harmful ingredients. Do your homework and know what you are considering ingesting.

#### **Follow the science**

- Science matters. While natural is good, you don't want to trust your family's health to a formula cooked up in a kitchen sink or passed down as a family heirloom. You need a scientifically proven solution based on years of pharmaceutical and health care experience [and recommended by licensed medical professionals](#).

#### **There is no substitute for actual clinical trials**

- New medications must undergo extensive clinical trials and testing before they can be sold to the public. While this is not true for supplements, NovaFerrum has voluntarily gone the extra mile to submit to a seven-year long clinical trial of its iron supplement formulation. We are proud to be the ONLY iron supplement on the market today to be proven safe, effective and well-tolerated through a full-scale clinical trial, the results of which were published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA). Smart consumers must accept no substitute for this gold-standard in testing.

#### **Ask your doctor**

- What you put into your body impacts your health in myriad ways, so choosing a supplement is essentially making a medical decision for yourself and your family. With that in mind, you should not leave these decisions to word of mouth or who has the best advertising. We urge you to consult with your doctor on all matters related to vitamins and supplements. Once you do, we are certain that NovaFerrum will be the only choice.

**For more information on NovaFerrum, its iron supplements or its clinical trial, please visit [www.novaferrum.com](http://www.novaferrum.com).**