



HARMFUL SUPPLEMENT INGREDIENTS TO AVOID



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It is incredibly important to always check the back label of your supplement bottles before purchasing as very often you will find quite toxic ingredients as fillers. Below is a list of some of the most popular supplement additives and their side effects. This is not an all-inclusive list and there are dozens more toxic ingredients you want to look out for. A good rule of thumb is if you don't know what an ingredient is, it most likely isn't good. I suggest always googling the ingredients you don't know to be sure whether or not they are harmful.



Titanium Dioxide: Commonly used in paint, cosmetics, paper, and sunscreen, titanium dioxide has no actual nutrient value and serves only as a filler to whiten products. It is FDA approved—but only in very small amounts (less than 1 percent of the formulation). Health advocates blame this colorant for its side-effects such as allergies, stomach cancer, autoimmune disorder, and organ toxicity. When inhaled as a dust, titanium dioxide is classified as possibly carcinogenic to humans by the International Agency for Research on Cancer.

Magnesium Silicate: Commercially used in deodorant and cosmetics, Magnesium silicate is an additive that most white-coated minerals, supplements, and vitamins are coated with. It is similar in composition to asbestos. Talc is not currently considered food grade by the FDA and has been known to cause lung problems and stomach diseases.

Hydrogenated Oil: Most fat-soluble supplements also have fillers such as hydrogenated oil from genetically-modified (or non-organic) soya bean or canola. It's been known to cause cardiovascular problems, diabetes, nervous system problems, and non-absorption of essential fatty acids as well as inflammation. Hydrogenated oils increase low-density lipoprotein cholesterol and decrease high-density lipoprotein (HDL - good cholesterol) which results in coronary heart disease (CHD). In 2010, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans called for limiting consumption of hydrogenated oil, transfat, and solid fat.

Colouring (Red 40, Blue 2, Yellow 5): Many supplement brands add colouring to their supplements to make them more attractive to children however these colourings are known to cause brain inflammation, cancer, and many other conditions.

Artificial Flavors: Artificial and “natural” flavors in supplements come in the form of high-fructose corn syrup, hydrolyzed vegetable protein, artificial sweetener, flavor enhancers and other unnecessary ingredients in your vitamins. You will find them most often in children's vitamins to make them taste good. However, these ingredients have been linked to diabetes, hypertension among kids and weight gain.

Lead, Mercury and PCBs: Industrial waste such as lead, mercury, and PCBs are polluting our oceans and seas and have been affecting large fish such as salmon, tuna, cod and others. This effect is carried over to many fish oil supplements. The Council for Responsible Nutrition, among others, has called for disclosure on sources of minerals, supplements, and vitamins, to trace if they have lead, mercury, and PCBs. It is therefore recommended to make sure your fish oil supplements are molecularly distilled and third-party tested to ensure their safety. You want to find a good brand that offers supplements that only use carefully selected, highest quality ingredients. “Supplements are not created equal since the quality of processing absorption varies across the different brands. The best is to call brands directly and ask if their products have been tested for heavy metals. They legally have to disclose their testing results if you ask.

Polysorbate 20 and 80: These ingredients pop up often in supplements that are emulsified such as vitamin D, E and A. Always check the label for these ingredients as they are highly toxic and inflammatory and are known carcinogens.

Red Algae Extract (aka Carageenan): You will find this in many cheaper supplements that use fillers. Red Algae is the new name for carageenan and is known to cause colon cancer when consumed in significant amounts.

Yeast Extract (aka MSG): Yeast extract is also another name for monosodium glutamate (MSG) and is known to cause severe allergic reactions, headaches, cancer and brain inflammation.

There are many more toxic ingredients but these are the main ones to look out for. At the end of the day, choose high quality brands, even if they cost extra (it is worth it), that use whole-food ingredients and that are preferably certified gluten free and organic.

