

Supplements Are Health Risks, Says Researchers

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. Cast doubt /kɑːst daʊt/ - to make (something) seem less likely
Example: The incident cast doubt on her honesty.
2. unregulated /ˌənˈregjəˌleɪdəd/ - not controlled or supervised by regulations or laws.
Example: It has recently become an issue because it is so visible and entirely unregulated.
3. in the dark /ɪn ðə dɑːk/ - in a state of ignorance about something.
Example: We're clearly being kept in the dark about what's happening.
4. react /rɪˈækt/ - to act in a particular way as a direct result of something else
Example: Our eye react s to light.
5. urge /ɜːrj/ - to encourage someone strongly to do something or to ask that something be done
Example: Party leaders urged her to run for Congress.



Millions of people take dietary supplements in the belief that they boost health. New research **casts doubt on** these pills and tablets. The American organization Consumer Reports (CR) found serious health risks from vitamins, probiotics, and weight loss pills. CR said the biggest problem is that supplements are largely **unregulated**.

Medicinal drugs have to be tested for safety and effectiveness, but supplements need much less government approval. This means consumers are **in the dark** regarding the ingredients of the supplements and how the body **reacts** to them.

Lisa Gill, a journalist from CR said the report showed the dangers of supplements. She said they could cause liver and kidney failure, kidney transplants, and heart problems. Gill added: "Just because it's not prescription, you say, 'oh, it's safe,' but that's not necessarily true."

She **urged** people to avoid 15 ingredients in supplements, including red yeast and caffeine powder. She warned: "There have been deaths associated with each of these." She told people to see a doctor or pharmacist before taking supplements. She said: "Treat it like a medication....It's really about your health."

DISCUSSION

1. Why don't people eat more healthily instead of taking supplements?
2. How healthy is your diet?
3. Why do people think they need supplements?
4. How dangerous is it to take things without a prescription?
5. What are the healthiest things you can eat?