



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION



17 July 2013

FDA ADVISORY

No. **2013-020**

Center for Food Regulation and Research

SUBJECT: CONSUMERS ADVISED TO READ FOOD/DIETARY SUPPLEMENT PRODUCT LABELS AND TO USE THE FDA WEBSITE (<http://www.fda.gov.ph>) TO VALIDATE INFORMATION AND HEALTH CLAIMS

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is seriously concerned over the massive advertisement, promotion and marketing of food/dietary supplements (F/DS) which may have often misled some consumers to buy them as drugs or medicines. Food/dietary supplements (F/DS) are processed food in the form of capsules, tablets, liquid, gels, powders or pills and are intended to increase the total daily food energy or nutrient intake. However, F/DS are often advertised, promoted and marketed as agents that can cure or treat people who are suffering from cancer, meningitis, diabetes, hypertension, asthma, and hypercholesterolemia, among other various diseases and disorders. FDA strongly advises the public that food / dietary supplements are merely adjunct nutritional substance to support food intake and are NOT meant to replace prescribed drugs and medicines especially those that are supposed to be taken as maintenance medicine (e.g. for hypertension, dyslipidemia, diabetes, cancer, etc). If you intend to take food / dietary supplements, please inform your physician.

All F/DS are regulated by the Center for Food Regulation and Research (CFRR) and all FDA registered food products have Certificates of Product Registration (CPR) issued by the CFRR as food products.

Recently, the FDA Inspectorate discovered an unregistered **food**/dietary supplement product in the market containing raw 500 mg Cayenne powder (a.k.a. powdered chili pepper) per capsule of 100/plastic container. Upon closer inspection of the principal display panel, the product is an Appetite Suppressant and Fat Metabolizer, which are **drug** therapeutic claims not substantiated by any clinical trial data to establish safety and efficacy. The side panel of the label shows that a **cosmetic** distributor owns the unregistered product, which was manufactured by a food supplement corporation licensed as **food** manufacturer. The product is also available through the internet.

Consumers are advised to be vigilant and always read the product labels. The phrase "Food Supplement" and "NO APPROVED THERAPEUTIC CLAIMS" should always be printed on the principal display panel. Likewise, the names of the manufacturer, trader or distributor, date of manufacture and expiration date of the product should be found on the label. All F/DS should have no indication to treat or cure any type of medical conditions.

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All consumers are enjoined to validate all information and product label claims, especially those with curative and therapeutic effects, by simply accessing the FDA website (www.fda.gov.ph).

- To verify if the product has CPR, simply click the tab **"CONSUMER CORNER"** and then Click **"REGISTERED FOOD SUPPLEMENTS"**. The names of the F/DS products are arranged in alphabetical order. A faster way is to use the **SEARCH** tab found in the upper right hand corner of the website. Type the product name and wait until the name of the product appears. The product name will appear if a CPR has been issued by the FDA. If you click the product name, the following information will appear: a) Product Name, b) Company Name, c) Registration No., and d) Date Issued and Expiry Date (of the CPR).
- To verify if the health or nutritional claims of the product have been authorized by the FDA to be placed on the label, please email us at report@fda.gov.ph or visit our website and click **eReport** tab. Under the Contact Form, fill in the information required: a) Name, b) Email, c) Subject, and d) Message (type in your query about the product). The message will be received by the FDA, and expect a reply within 24 hours.
- To validate if the food manufacturer or distributor has a valid License to Operate (LTO), Click on the **Industry Corner** tab. Under the "Food Industry", click "Food Manufacturer" or "Food Distributor". The names of the food establishment are arranged in alphabetical order. The following information will appear when the name of the establishment is clicked: a) Company Name, b) Address, c) Owner, d) LTO No., e) Date Issued (of the LTO), and f) Expiry Date (of the LTO).
- To report any adverse reactions for using a specific cosmetic product, please email us at report@fda.gov.ph.

All consumers are advised to always read product labels and check out the FDA website to validate information and product label claims before buying any food supplements, particularly those that have curative and therapeutic claims or are priced exorbitantly high.


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