
The Benefits of Nutritional Supplements: Introductory Information

Compiled by Annette Dickinson, Ph.D.
Council for Responsible Nutrition
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Abbreviations Used in This Document

AI	Adequate Intake
AMD, ARMD	Age-related macular degeneration
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CHD	Coronary heart disease
CRN	Council for Responsible Nutrition
DRI	Dietary Reference Intakes
EAR	Estimated Average Requirement
FDA	U.S. Food and Drug Administration
HDL	High-density lipoprotein cholesterol
HHS	Department of Health and Human Services
LDL	Low-density lipoprotein cholesterol
MI	Myocardial infarction
NHANES	National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey
NIH	National Institutes of Health
NLEA	Nutrition Labeling and Education Act of 1990
NTDs	Neural tube birth defects
RDA	Recommended Dietary Allowances
UL	Upper Tolerable Intake Level
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture

Units of Measure

g	Gram (1 g = 1000 mg)
IU	International Units (used for vitamins A, D, and E)
µg	Microgram (1000 µg = 1 mg), scientific abbreviation
mcg	Microgram, abbreviation used in dietary supplement labeling
mg	Milligram (1000 mg = 1 g)
µmol/L	Micromoles per liter (blood levels of a substance)
nmol/L	Nanomoles per liter (blood levels of a substance)
mmol/L	Millimoles per liter (blood levels of a substance)

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About the Council for Responsible Nutrition

The Council for Responsible Nutrition (CRN) is a trade association representing manufacturers of dietary supplements. CRN's diverse membership, whose products represent the majority of nutritional supplement sales in the United States, share the commitment to provide beneficial, safe, quality supplements to consumers. Member companies include manufacturers of brand name and private label finished products, manufacturers of bulk ingredients used to formulate dietary supplements, suppliers of packaging and labeling, affiliate members who manufacture related products or ingredients, associate members who provide services ranging from public relations to laboratory analysis, and international correspondents.

CRN's membership has ratified a Code of Ethics which affirms that CRN member companies:

- are dedicated to enhancing the health of the American public through improved nutrition, including the appropriate use of nutritional supplements;
- are committed to reducing health care costs through improved nutrition, health promotion, and disease prevention; and
- recognize their duty to provide the public with safe and beneficial nutritional supplements, manufactured to high quality standards, and to ensure that consumers are provided with the accurate information they need to make informed choices.

CRN is governed by its President and Chief Executive Officer, John Cordaro, and by a Board of Directors made up of representatives of member companies.

Additional information about CRN and its staff is available on the website at www.crnusa.org

About the Author

Annette Dickinson, Ph.D., is Vice President, Scientific and Regulatory Affairs, for the Council for Responsible Nutrition. A recognized expert and author, Dr. Dickinson has 30 years of experience with the dietary supplement industry. She was recently appointed to serve a 3-year term on the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Food Advisory Committee. She was appointed by President Clinton to the Commission on Dietary Supplement Labels and is a frequent witness before the U.S. Congress and a speaker at numerous other public forums.

Her expertise includes the legal and technical aspects of marketing dietary supplements, including provisions relating to labeling, advertising, and good manufacturing practices. She is responsible for analyzing and responding to new regulatory or legislative proposals as well as evaluating new scientific research relating to the safety and benefits of dietary supplements. Dr. Dickinson is a recognized leader in the development of industry and government policies based upon current science.

A frequent contributor to national and international meetings and technical symposia, Dr. Dickinson is often called upon by the print and electronic media to represent the industry view on issues affecting dietary supplements. She earned her Ph.D. in nutritional sciences and her M.S. in food sciences at the University of Maryland.

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