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**PEER-REVIEWED AND PUBLISHED STUDY FINDS PHYSICIANS AND NURSES  
USE AND RECOMMEND SUPPLEMENTS**

WASHINGTON, D.C., *July 14, 2009* — Physicians and nurses are as likely as members of the general public to use dietary supplements and most physicians and nurses recommend supplements to their patients<sup>1</sup>, says a [new study](#) published in *Nutrition Journal*, a peer-reviewed, on-line journal that focuses on the field of human nutrition. The study, which utilized data from the “Life...supplemented” Healthcare Professionals (HCP) Impact Study, found that 72 percent of physicians and 89 percent of nurses used dietary supplements and that 79 percent of physicians and 82 percent of nurses said that they recommend dietary supplements to their patients.

“Health professionals including physicians and nurses are just as interested in healthy lifestyles as members of the general public and are just as likely to benefit from rational supplementation,” the authors—Annette Dickinson, Ph.D., consultant and past president of the Council for Responsible Nutrition; Andrew Shao, Ph.D., vice president, scientific and regulatory affairs, Council for Responsible Nutrition; and Nicolas Boyon, senior vice president, Ipsos Public Affairs, who conducted the HCP Study—state in the article.

The study found that the dietary supplement product most commonly used was the multivitamin, with or without minerals. Vitamins and other minerals most commonly used by both physicians and nurses after multivitamins included vitamin C, a B vitamin complex, vitamin D, vitamin E and calcium. However, physicians and nurses seemed to differ slightly on the non-vitamin and mineral products they used most

often—physicians reported higher usages of green tea, fish oil, glucosamine, soy, flax seed and chondroitin (in that order) while nurses tended to use green tea, fish oil, echinacea, glucosamine and flax seed, respectively.

Overall health and wellness is the biggest motivator for taking dietary supplements, according to 40 percent of physicians and 48 percent of nurses who take supplements. However, more than two-thirds cited multiple motivations, including bone health, flu or colds, heart health, immune health, joint health, energy and musculoskeletal pain. Most physicians and nurses cite similar reasons for recommending dietary supplements to their patients, with the most common reason being for overall health and wellness (41 percent of physicians who recommend supplements and 62 percent of nurses who do), followed by bone health, joint health, flu or colds, heart health, immune health, musculoskeletal pain, and energy. Over three-quarters (75 percent of physicians and 79 percent of nurses) also indicated that they would be interested in Continuing Medical Education regarding dietary supplements.

This latest survey adds to the growing body of published data suggesting that healthcare professionals are among the highest users of supplements. For example, in a survey of women physicians, it was reported that 64 percent used vitamin or mineral supplements at least occasionally and 47 percent of the women used a vitamin or mineral supplement at least 5 days a week.<sup>2</sup>

“It may appear surprising that physicians and nurses are as likely as the general population to be using dietary supplements, given the negative views sometimes expressed editorially in medical journals,” the authors conclude. “Physicians and nurses, as well as lay consumers, are exposed to these divergent views and must make their own decisions regarding their personal approach to wellness. The majority opt to use dietary supplements.”

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<sup>1</sup> Dickinson A, Boyon N, Shao A. Physicians and nurses use and recommend dietary supplements: report of a survey. *Nutrition Journal* 2009, 8:29doi:10.1186/1475-2891-8-29.

<sup>2</sup> Frank E, Bendich A, Denniston M. Use of vitamin-mineral supplements by female physicians in the United States. *Am J Clin Nutr* 2000;72:969-975.

**Note to Editor:** To arrange an interview with Drs. Annette Dickinson or Andrew Shao, please contact Season Solorio at [ssolorio@crnusa.org](mailto:ssolorio@crnusa.org) or 202-204-7682.

**Note to Editor:** The Council for Responsible Nutrition (CRN), founded in 1973, is a Washington, D.C.-based trade association representing dietary supplement manufacturers and ingredient suppliers. In addition to complying with a host of federal and state regulations governing dietary supplements, CRN members also agree to adhere to voluntary guidelines for manufacturing, marketing and CRN’s Code of Ethics. Visit [www.crnusa.org](http://www.crnusa.org).