

Diet Pill Danger

As of 2016, more than two thirds of adults living in the United States are obese, leaving millions of Americans with an increased risk for many health problems associated with obesity. Excess weight increases a person's risk for illnesses such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and various cancers which all could lead to both short- and long-term health consequences. In an effort to shed excess pounds and achieve a healthy weight, many are turning to dietary supplements marketed as "appetite suppressants" or "fat burners" with no scientific evidence of these claims. Not only are these supplements ineffective, they can also be dangerous because many of these supplements are not tested for safety before hitting the shelves. For example, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) banned the sale of dietary supplements containing ephedra (also called ma huang) because of serious health risks. Ephedra was found to pose risks such as cardiovascular complications and even death. Before adding weight loss supplements to your diet, consult with your health care provider and know that "natural" does not mean "safe." Additionally, remember that the most effective and safest way to lose weight is eating a healthy diet and being physically active.



National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (2016). Weight Control. Retrieved from <https://nccih.nih.gov/health/weightloss?nav=govd>