

Supplement Industry Associations Applaud FDA Actions to Protect Consumers from Fraudulent Products Related to Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

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The U.S. dietary supplement industry commends the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for taking action to protect consumers by calling out marketers who make illegal and unsubstantiated drug claims related to COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2. In February, the industry issued strong **warning** to companies and consumers to avoid marketing or using dietary supplements that are presented as treating, curing or preventing COVID-19.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March, FDA has sent **warning letters** to 16 companies responding to claims that their products can prevent, treat or cure COVID-19. The agency has cited language on the companies' websites and social media channels as evidence of these deceptive claims. We applaud FDA for taking swift action and urge continued aggressive prosecution against products being promoting with illegal and unsubstantiated claims of prevention or treatment of COVID-19.

The four leading trade associations representing the dietary supplement industry support the responsible sale and use of vitamins, minerals, herbs and other dietary supplements that provide many positive benefits promoting better health and wellness. As we face the unprecedented threat of this global pandemic, illegal and unsubstantiated drug claims misdirect consumers toward ineffective products, divert them from seeking critical medical care, and endanger the public health.

While research supports the use of certain dietary supplements to maintain healthy immune system responses, we are not aware of any clinical research studies that demonstrate the efficacy of using a dietary supplement specifically to prevent or to treat COVID-19. Even if research is conducted and published on this topic, the law that regulates dietary supplements in the U.S., the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act of 1994, prohibits marketers of dietary supplements from promoting any dietary supplement product by making disease prevention or treatment claims.

The American Herbal Products Association (AHPA), the Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA), the Council for Responsible Nutrition (CRN), and the United Natural Products Alliance (UNPA) in February endorsed the following unified advisory for marketers and retailers, as well as for consumers of dietary supplements:

- Marketers and retailers of dietary supplements should refuse to stock or sell any supplements that are presented as treating, curing or preventing COVID-19.
- Marketers and retailers should refrain from promoting any dietary supplement as a cure, treatment or prevention for

COVID-19.

- Consumers should avoid any product that is claiming to treat, cure or prevent COVID-19 and report such products to the Food and Drug Administration.
- Anyone who believes they may have COVID-19 or may have come in contact with the novel coronavirus should contact a healthcare professional immediately. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more information on the coronavirus disease and the proper actions to take if you suspect you are ill.

Each trade association and its member companies prioritizes the safety and well-being of consumers above all else. The responsible industry is committed to providing the public with safe, high-quality dietary supplement products that provide many positive benefits to promote better health and wellness.

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The **American Herbal Products Association (AHPA)** is the national trade association and voice of the herbal and botanical products industry. AHPA is comprised of more than 300 domestic and foreign companies doing business as growers, processors, manufacturers, and marketers of herbs and herbal products, including foods, dietary supplements, cosmetics, and non-prescription drugs. Founded in 1982, AHPA's mission is to promote the responsible commerce of herbal products. Website: www.ahpa.org.

The **Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA)**, founded in 1881, is the national trade association representing the leading manufacturers and marketers of over-the-counter (OTC) medicines, dietary supplements, and consumer medical devices. Every dollar spent by consumers on OTC medicines saves the U.S. healthcare system more than \$7, contributing a total of \$146 billion in savings each year. CHPA is committed to empowering consumer self-care by preserving and expanding choice and availability of consumer healthcare products. Visit www.chpa.org.

The **Council for Responsible Nutrition (CRN)**, founded in 1973, is a Washington, D.C.-based trade association representing 150+ dietary supplement and functional food manufacturers, ingredient suppliers, and companies providing services to those manufacturers and suppliers. In addition to complying with a host of federal and state regulations governing dietary supplements and food in the areas of manufacturing, marketing, quality control and safety, our manufacturer and supplier members also agree to adhere to additional voluntary guidelines as well as to CRN's Code of Ethics. Visit www.crnusa.org. Follow us on Twitter [@CRN_Supplements](https://twitter.com/CRN_Supplements), and [LinkedIn](#).

The **United Natural Products Alliance (UNPA)** is an international trade association representing nearly 120 leading natural products, dietary supplement, functional food, scientific and technology and related service companies that share a commitment to provide consumers with natural health products of superior quality, benefit and reliability. Founded in Utah in 1992, UNPA was instrumental in the passage of the 1994 Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) and continues to take a leadership position in legislative and regulatory issues and industry best practices. Visit www.unpa.com. Follow us on Twitter [@UNPANational](https://twitter.com/UNPANational) and [LinkedIn](#).