



## San Francisco Department of Public Health

### CHINATOWN PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER

(Formerly Health Center #4)

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August 19, 1999

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)  
Food and Drug Administration  
5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061  
Rockville, MD 20852

Re: (Docket No. 99N-1174)

Dear FDA officer,

We are submitting our comments on the development of an effective strategy in the regulation of dietary supplements. We are extremely concerned about this issue because currently a lot of companies use false, misleading and unsubstantiated claims to sell their products. The claims for the products' curative power is dangerous and harmful for the clients. As a result, some forfeit their medical treatment regime and rely solely on these "miracle" products. We urge the Food & Drug Administration to take the following immediate steps to protect and maintain a healthier environment for our population in the areas of establishing testing and label regulation on dietary supplements:

#### **I. Labeling**

- Labeling regulation should be established to inform the consumer of the ingredients of the product.
- Dietary supplement labels should indicate any possible interaction of the ingredients with other medications, supplements and foods.
- Directions on dosage should be included. Risks of over dosage or inappropriate dosage should be listed.
- Any health claims should be substantiated by tests and studies.
- The product should also bear information of the manufacturer such as the name and location. An information phone line of the product should be included.
- These same regulations should apply to imported products. Imported dietary supplement must have a correct translation of the accurate label in English.

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## 2. Testing

- Dietary supplements, domestic or imported, should be proven to be safe for human consumption before they are marketed.
- Funding should be allocated for long term studies on the effects of specific products in order to verify claims.
- In case a product has not been tested for safety or there is no available information with regard to the ingredients, their interaction with food and medication, and any potential hazard to the consumer, the product must bear a warning stating the lack of such information.

We urge FDA to design an easy mechanism so that both consumers and providers can report any suspicious health products or adverse event for FDA's investigative and enforcement actions; and implement regional coalitions to guide the development of the strategy, so that consumers have access to safe dietary supplements that are truthfully and not misleadingly labeled.

Thank you for your attention. For further questions, you can reach us at 415-705-8565.

Sincerely,



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Center Director



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Public Health Nutritionist

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