

Tragic Loss of Life Linked With Dietary Supplements Sold for Weight Loss and Muscle Building

- In July 2017, the Journal of Medical Toxicology published a report on the almost 50% increase in calls to poison control centers about children accidentally overdosing on their parents' dietary supplements. News media widely covered the story and urged parents to treat supplements as medicines and keep them away from children
<http://www.cnn.com/2017/07/24/health/dietary-supplements-poison-control-study/index.html>
- In July 2017, young mother Lucero Garza aged 24 died after taking the weight loss supplement 'Avitia Cobrax', which she bought online via Facebook. The pills were marketed as a natural remedy, but doctors treating her detected inflammation in the brain, which they attributed to the tablets.
<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/diet-pills-facebook-dead-young-mother-24-years-old-lucero-garza-mexico-monterrey-avitia-cobrax-a7824206.html>
- In Feb 2017, 21 year old Bethany Shipsey took an overdose of supplements containing dinitrophenol, or DNP, which accelerates the metabolism and increases body temperature, as an act of self-harm after learning that they had been linked to a number of recent deaths.
<http://metro.co.uk/2017/07/29/young-woman-died-from-diet-pill-overdose-after-hospital-did-nothing-6815432/>
- In Jan 2017, Anna Phillips, a 20 year old medical student who had been experiencing mental health difficulties took an overdose of dietary supplements to end her own life. A coroner ruled that "urgent action needs to be taken to stop people buying [these] drugs [easily]"
<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/2709039/medical-student-died-diet-pills-turkey/>
- In 2016, father Lewis Brown, 25, took a large amount of supplements containing DNP, which led to his internal body temperature reading 103.64 °F. Doctors put Brown in an induced coma and gave him ice baths, while warning his family to prepare for the worst. Although he survived, Brown had a leg muscle surgically removed, as it had died during the toxic event.
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3381099/Father-nearly-died-overdosing-diet-pills-gain-beach-body.html#ixzz4onrxkJbW>
- In 2016, a 27 year old father Matthew Whitby experienced liver failure was given two weeks to live after taking popular weight-loss products that he bought online from a supplements store. Doctors say the substance that most likely caused his condition was green tea extract, an ingredient which is approved for sale.
<http://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/health/diet/wa-man-matthew-whitby-nearly-died-after-taking-two-popular-dietary-supplements/news-story/33b27e4f5d872815581e43fa50e27f4f>

- In 2015, 21 year old Eloise Aimee Parry died after taking weight loss supplements she purchased online to help her lose weight. The supplements Parry took were found to contain DNP, a highly toxic industrial chemical, which left Parry “burning up from within.”
<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/student-died-diet-pills-text-fearing-death-article-1.2302283>
- In 2015, 45-year-old Chris Wilcock suffered a heart attack and died after taking T5, a fat burning supplement available on the internet, in response to being harassed about his weight. Tests revealed that his body had contained as much caffeine as 300 cups of coffee at the time of his death.
<http://www.techtimes.com/articles/64848/20150630/man-dies-after-allegedly-taking-banned-diet-pills.html>
- In 2014, weight loss supplement OxyElite Pro was linked to 97 cases of acute non-viral hepatitis resulting in 47 hospitalizations, three liver transplants, and the death of a mother of seven. OxyElite Pro has since been recalled.
<http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp1315559>
- In 2013, Michael Lee Sparling, a 22-year-old Army private in excellent physical condition, went into cardiac arrest and died after taking the recommended dose of a workout supplement “Jack3d,” which promises “ultra-intense muscle gorging strength, energy, power, and endurance.” This supplement contains DMAA, which experts say acts similarly to amphetamines.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/17/business/a-soldiers-parents-take-aim-at-gnc-and-a-supplement-maker.html>
- In 2013, medical student Sarah Houston, 23, who had been battling bulimia bought DNP slimming pills and was found to have taken 30 of a 100 pill packet. The coroner investigating her death reported DNP was ‘entirely’ responsible for Miss Houston’s death.
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2312986/Sarah-Houston-Banned-slimming-drug-DNP-kills-medical-student-coroner-attacks-online-dealers-target-vulnerable.html>
- In 2012, 17-year-old Christopher Herrera suffered severe liver damage after using concentrated green tea extract purchased at a nutrition store as a “fat burning” supplement. Christopher was put on the list for a liver transplant and although doctors were able to save his liver, he can no longer play sports, spend long amounts of time outdoors, or exert himself.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/22/us/spike-in-harm-to-liver-is-tied-to-dietary-aids.html>
- In 2011, two U.S. soldiers, ages 22 and 32, collapsed during training and died soon afterward. Autopsies revealed the presence of dimethylamylamine (DMAA), a stimulant found in muscle-building supplements, in their systems. DMAA has since been banned in dietary supplements.
<http://www.foxnews.com/us/2012/02/02/soldier-deaths-during-training-sparks-military-probe-into-supplement-use/>