# Regulations might be needed for nutrition supplements

Yoshiyasu Takefuji

Paula A. Kiberstis wrote an article entitled “Some fishy supplements?” (1). In Norway, regulations are in place to ensure that nutritional supplements are safe and reliably marketed. Products in which the content of vitamins and minerals exceeds the maximum values defined by the regulations are classified as pharmaceuticals (2). In US, according to FDA, dietary supplements are treated more like special foods. A dietary supplement is a product taken by mouth that contains a ”dietary ingredient” intended to supplement or enhance the diet (3). The ”dietary ingredients” in these products may include: vitamins, minerals, herbs or other botanicals, amino acids, and substances such as enzymes, organ tissues, glandulars, and metabolites (3). Dietary supplements can also be extracts or concentrates, and may be found in many forms such as tablets, capsules, soft gels, gel caps, liquids, or powders (3). Whatever their form may be, the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act of 1994 places dietary supplements in a special category under the general umbrella of ”foods,” not drugs, and requires that every supplement be labeled a dietary supplement (3). In order to eliminate fishy supplements, regulations might be needed.

References:

1. Paula A. Kiberstis, Some fishy supplements?, Science 30 Nov 2018: Vol. 362, Issue 6418, pp. 1015
2. Katja Svennevig, The difference between drugs and nutritional supplements, Tidsskr Nor Legeforen 2011;131:1074
3. https://www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/QuestionsAnswers/ucm100102.htm