

# ORTHODOX JUDIASM & KOSHER-CERTIFIED SUPPLEMENTS

If you aren't Jewish, you don't have to bother reading this. In this topic of kosher supplements, consider yourself lucky that you can consume whatever you want. Cow adrenal glands? Sure, why not. Shark cartilage? Excellent. Basically you can move on the next (or previous) post. :-h

If you are an orthodox Jew like I am, however, the source of the supplements you take is one of the most questioned and mis-understood topic that I deal with. This topic is especially important in cities such as here in Toronto, where it is difficult to find a large variety of **quality** kosher-certified supplements. Hopefully, this will address some of those issues and help you understand a bit better. Let me start off by saying, I'm not a Rabbi (obviously), so I do not have the authority to make decisions on whether or not the supplement you are taking is "ok". That being said, when I first started in the field of Holistic Nutrition, I spoke with a very nice, patient and prominent Rabbi and posek in NYC, Rabbi Leibel Katz, who took the time to explain to me the following guidelines.

(1) The majority of supplements are considered medicine (even vitamins, minerals and the like) and are therefore treated as such with regards to kosher laws. Therefore, any supplement in capsule, caplet or liquid form that is labelled as 100% vegetarian or vegan (such as the product shown left) is fine for anyone to take and it does not need a hechsher. A supplement that contains Vitamin D3, however, cannot be labelled as vegetarian since it is made from sheeps wool, however, it is fine to take.

(2) A supplement that is vegetarian but encapsulated in a non-kosher capsule (usually gelatin) may or may not be a problem. Most poskim agree that a hard gelatin capsule is not a problem, but a softgel cap can be a problem. This is due to the way it is processed.

(3) Fish oil sourced from kosher fish (such as sardines, salmon, etc.) is usually not a problem, but care must be taken to ensure that all the ingredients are not from traif sources. This can sometimes be difficult so unless you know a particular company's ingredients and practices, it is best to consult a rabbi.

(4) A supplement that is completely non-kosher and has traif ingredients should not be taken in liquid, chewable or caplet form, but MAY be allowed in capsule form if (a) there's no vegetarian or kosher equivalent and (b) the person is ill and requires the supplement to feel better. (In some cases it can be taken to prevent illness as well if this is determined to be necessary by a health care practitioner). In all these instances, a Rabbi must be consulted.

(5) If the purpose of the supplement you are taking is to get stronger or enhance sports performance (ie. creatine, whey protein) then it is NOT

considered medicine and must be kosher-certified.

Obviously, if you can get kosher certified supplements that's the best way to go. But remember, not all supplements are created equal....the kosher brand I would recommend? Definitely [Maxi Health](#) or [NutriSupreme](#) above the other products out there. Of course, whatever supplement(s) you take, may it lead you to the best of health!

---