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Ephedra-based diet pills and doping

By Dana Scripca

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Spectacular sport performances often coexisted with equally sensational doping cases. One of the most common and popular enhancing substances was the Ephedra-based diet pill. Many sportsmen were publicly shamed, banned from their sport and left the competitive scene.

Why should athletes stay away from Ephedra pill?

Ephedrine, either as a dietary supplement, or as the Ephedra weight-loss pill, is a banned substance. Any athlete who fails the Ephedrine doping test is forever discredited. Here are the reasons why the Ephedra-based diet pill is condemned in the sports world:

- * Ephedrine causes a dramatic increase in the activity of the central nervous system.
- * The Ephedra energy pill has a significant stimulatory effect on cells. The athlete's metabolism is stimulated, as more free fatty acids are produced from the breakdown of triglycerides in the adipose tissue. This is a very positive effect.
- * The Ephedra pill improves the force of skeletal muscle contractions with a powerful effect on performance. It is commonly taken immediately before a competition. When administered at a certain dosage (Ephedra minimum: 25 to a maximum of 50 mg) and only for a few weeks, it has real benefits. It should not be taken at higher doses or for longer periods.

A primary symptom of Ephedrine is a higher body temperature. After few weeks of using it, this symptom disappears and the athlete will know that the substance has lost its power. A break of 2-3 months is required before it can be taken again in training sessions (not competitions). Another combination containing Ephedra is the ECA stack: ephedrina, caffeine and aspirin. Ephedrine and caffeine behave as thermogenic agents. Aspirin inhibits lipogenesis by blocking the incorporation of acetate into fatty acids. Monitoring the body temperature is suggested.

Those who use the Ephedra-based diet pill should always be aware of the unpleasant, and sometimes risky, side effects, such as:

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1. tremor of hands
2. sweating
3. dizziness
4. rapid heartbeats

The diet-energy Ephedra supplement is a strong and effective stimulant which induces high performance. Its properties make it a source of great temptation for athletes who long for great sports performances. The intentional use of Ephedrine is punished by international laws, called doping-control regulations. As a general rule, sportspersons are told to avoid any product claiming to be a:

1. "fatburner" or
2. "muscle building".

They are also advised to stay away from:

1. the black market (source of the so-called "street drugs") and
2. unlabelled products.

A review of international anti-doping efforts

Doping may well have appeared at the same time as competitions themselves. The first Greek runners are said to have taken foreign substances in order to improve their performance during the games. Strychnine, caffeine, cocaine and alcohol have been used to enhance sports performance. The first worldwide efforts to stop doping were made in 1928. The International Amateur Athletic Federation banned the use of stimulant agents and anabolic substances such as ephedrine and amphetamine. Other federations reacted, but still no testing was imposed. Later, in 1966, the UCI (cycling) and FIFA (football) introduced doping tests in the World Championships. In 1967, the International Olympic Committee created a medical commission and made public a list of prohibited substances. Further drug tests were introduced at the Olympic Winter Games at Grenoble and at the Olympic Games in Mexico in 1968.

Most international sports federations are committed to drug tests. The setting up of WADA in 1999 was crucial for the anti-doping international campaign. WADA sustains and promotes fundamental values in sport. Organizations and governments joined in the effort to eliminate drugs and stimulants. The year 2004 was considered essential in the anti-doping effort, since before the Athens Olympics, the WADA Code had been implemented worldwide. This Code is to ensure that for the first time in history, the rules and regulations governing anti-doping will be the same in all sports and all countries.

Case studies

The eccentric soccer player Diego Armando Maradona is just one of the many famous sportsmen who made a contribution to the history of the Ephedra pill. When tested after a match against Nigeria at the WorldCup 1994, Maradona was found positive to Ephedrine, not allowed by FIFA. As a consequence, he was suspended from playing soccer for more than a year. The vast majority of sportsmen who fail the anti-doping test are disgraced. Besides, they have to undergo severe tests and reviews in order to return to competitions.

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Each sport has its own doping control regulations applicable in any country. For instance, Doping Disqualifications and Public Warnings, according to USATF are as shown in tabel. USATF is the National Governing Body for track and field, long-distance running and race walking in the United States.

Substance Public

Warning Name Event Event

Date Place

Disqualification

Steroids

Nikethamide 8/11/04 Torri Edwards 2004 Meeting IAAF du Conseil General

2004 U.S. Olympic Team Trials – T&F

4/24/04

7/9–18/04

1st place 100m, 200m

2nd place 100m, 3rd place 200m

Tetrahydrogestrinone 7/17/04 Regina Jacobs 2003 USA Outdoor T&F Championships 6/21/03 1st place 1500m

Tetrahydrocannabinol 7/9/04 Tim Rusan 2004 IAAF Grande Premio Rio de Atletismo 5/16/04 2nd place triple jump

Tetrahydrogestrinone 5/4/04 Kevin Toth 2003 IAAF World Championships 8/23/03 4th place shot put

Tetrahydrogestrinone 5/4/04 Kevin Toth 2003 USA Outdoor T&F Championships 6/21/03 1st place shot put

Tetrahydrogestrinone 4/29/04 John McEwen 2003 USA Outdoor T&F Championships 6/20/03 2nd place hammer throw

Tetrahydrogestrinone 4/29/04 Melissa Price 2003 USA Outdoor T&F Championships 6/19/03 1st place hammer throw

19-Norandrosterone and

19-Noreticholanolone 11/4/03 Damu Cherry Out-of-Competition 2/18/03 Competitive results from 2/18/03 – 11/24/03

Nandrolone and T/E 7/2/03 Andrew Eggerth 2003 Knights of Columbus Indoor Games, Saskatoon, Canada 2/9/03 5th place 200m, 6th place hurdles

Methandieone 9/11/02 Marcus Clavelle 2002 U.S. Open 6/8/02 3rd place shot put

T/E and Hydroxy-androstendione 3/12/03 Desiree Owen 2002 Conoco 10 km Rodeo Run 1/2/02 1st place 10 km

Methandieone 5/3/02 Scott Hennig Out-of-competition 11/28/01 Competitive results from 11/28/01 – 5/2/02

T/E 2/28/02 Jake Jensen 2001 Gugal Meeting, Linz, Austria 8/20/01 3rd place 200m

Stanozolol 12/7/01 Jeff Laynes 2001 International Lausitzer Meet 7/18/01 2nd place 100m

Stanozolol 12/7/01 Jeff Laynes 2001 Reunion International Meet 7/14/01 1st place 200m

Norandrosterone 6/12/01 Tony Dees 2001 Pontiac Grand Prix USA Indoor T&F Championships 3/3/01

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2nd place 60m hurdles

Norandrosterone/

Noretiochdandone 9/17/01 Tony Dees 2001 Norwich Union Indoor Grand Prix, Birmingham, Great Britain 2/18/01 3rd place 60m hurdles

Nandrolone 6/28/04 Jerome Young 1999 USA Outdoor T&F Championships 6/26/99 Competitive results from 6/26/99 – 6/25/01

Amphetamines

Methylphenidate 12/12/03 Rachel Walker 2003 USA Junior Outdoor T&F Championships 6/21/03 1st place javelin throw

Amphetamine 12/9/03 Chase Shealy 2003 USA Junior Outdoor T&F Championships 6/21/03 2nd place pole vault

Amphetamine 1/15/03 Emily Carlsten 2002 Penn Relays 4/26/02 1st place javelin throw

Amphetamine 5/14/02 Justin Gatlin 2001 Junior National Championships 6/16–17/01 1st place – 100m, 200m, and 110m hurdles

Methylphenidate 9/18/01 Antoinette Wilks 2001 Pontiac Grand Prix USA Indoor T&F Championships 3/3/01 4th place long jump

Stimulants

Modafinil Acide 7/26/04 Calvin Harrison 2003 USA Outdoor T&F Championships 6/21/03 2nd place 400m

Modafinil Acide 4/20/04 Christopher Phillips 2003 IAAF World Championships 8/30/03 5th place 110m hurdles

Modafinil Acide 5/19/04 Kelli White 2003 IAAF World Championships

2003 USA Outdoor T&F Championships

8/24/03 1st place 100m, 200m

1st place 100m, 200m

All events from 12/15/00 – 5/19/04

Modafinil Acide 4/20/04 Eric Thomas 2003 USA Outdoor T&F Championships 6/22/03 1st place 400m hurdles

Modafinil Acide 4/20/04 Sandra Glover 2003 USA Outdoor T&F Championships 6/21/03 3rd place 400m hurdles

Modafinil Acide 4/20/04 Chryste Gaines 2003 USA Outdoor T&F Championships 6/21/03 5th place 100m

Ephedrine 1/13/04 Mickey Grimes 2003 Pan American Games 8/6/03 1st place 100m

Ephedrine 10/11/02 Crystal Cox 2002 NACAC Under 25 Championships 8/11/02 1st place 200m

Ephedrine 12/10/02 Leon Settle 2002 Cezmi Athletics Championships 6/8/02 1st place 300m

Pseudoephedrine 7/30/02 James Hamilton 2002 Pittsburg Marathon 5/5/02 10th place

Pseudoephedrine 6/14/02 Louis Bordes 2002 Penn Relays 4/25/02 4th place 10,000m

Ephedrine 3/15/02 Joyce Bates 2002 Boston Indoor Games 1/27/02 2nd place 60m hurdles

Ephedrine 7/30/01 Bobby Smith 2001 Junior National Championships 6/17/01 1st place javelin throw

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Ephedrine 5/14/01 Robert Howard 2001 Pontiac Grand Prix USA Indoor T&F Championships 3/3/01
2nd place triple jump

Pseudoephedrine 5/10/01 Hazel Clark 2001 Pontiac Grand Prix USA Indoor T&F Championships
3/3/01 2nd place 800m

Cannabinoids

Cannabis (THC Metabolites) 9/21/2004 John Capel 2004 Team Challenge Cup – Munich, Germany
8/4/04 2nd place 100m

2nd place part of 4x100m U.S. "B" Relay

Cannabis (THC Metabolites) 9/9/2004 Bernard Williams 2004 Meeting de Atletismo Sevilla 6/5/04 2nd
place 200m

Dana Scripca writes for <http://www.dietpillscentral.com> where you can find more information about

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Ephedra – Is It Safe And Effective?

By Nick Nilsson

Burn fat while you sleep! Eat whatever you want and still lose weight! Don't suffer through hours of grueling exercise to burn fat!

You've probably heard all these phrases before but are the fat burners containing ephedra that these claims are attached to really that effective and are they safe?

The primary ingredient in fat burners is the herb ephedra, also known as ma huang, or it's manufactured version ephedrine. It has been used in Chinese herbal medicine quite safely and effectively for thousands of years. It is often combined with synthetic or herbal versions of caffeine (e.g. guarana, yerba mate or kola nut) and aspirin (e.g. white willow bark).

But does it burn fat?

The answer to that question is yes. Ephedra does effectively help the body to preferentially burn fat for energy. But, according to medical studies, there can be side effects, some of which are quite serious.

Ephedra works to burn fat through several means.

–Its chemical makeup increases the breakdown of fatty tissue for fuel. –Its stimulatory properties help to increase resting metabolism. This process is known as thermogenesis, which is essentially excess heat production. Your body burns more calories simply by producing more body heat. –When ephedra is combined with caffeine and aspirin, it may have appetite suppressant effects. –The nervous system

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stimulation you get can help you maintain your energy levels, which can aid you in your exercise program.

When used according to instructions and in moderate doses, studies suggest that fat-burning formulas containing ephedra, caffeine and aspirin can be safely and effectively used to SUPPLEMENT a good fat-burning program.

Fat burners should never be used as the sole means to achieve fat loss. A good fat loss program must also address diet and exercise, contrary to the hype you see on television and in print. Anyone who relies solely on pills to lose fat is usually doomed to regain the lost weight and potentially quite rapidly after they stop taking the pills.

There is a reason for this weight gain. These pills are effective, therefore the person does not necessarily have to change the habits that made them overweight in the first place. When a person discontinues use of ephedra without changing those habits, almost inevitably the weight will come back.

The fat-burning effects of ephedra do not come without a price, however. Ephedra has a number of side effects and should not be taken by people with certain conditions.

Some of these side effects may include: jitteriness, sleeplessness, increased heart rate and blood pressure, anxiety, skin flushing or tingling and nausea.

People who should not take ephedra include those suffering from heart disease, anxiety attacks, high blood pressure, diabetes, adrenal disease, thyroid disease or prostate disorders. If you are taking medication for high blood pressure or are taking antidepressants or MAO inhibitors, you should stay away from ephedra. Also, it is not recommended for pregnant women to use this herb.

Now that you know some of the pros and cons of taking ephedra supplements you, along with your doctor, can use this information to help decide whether or not ephedra is right for you.

For more information on fat loss and exercise, visit

Nick Nilsson is Vice President of BetterU, Inc., an online exercise, fitness, and personal training company. Check out his latest eBook "The Best Exercises You've Never Heard Of" at

or visit

. You can contact him at

or subscribe to BetterU News, his fitness newsletter at

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Fast Way To Lose Weight

Advantages Of Diet Pills: Diet Pill Phentermine

Diet Pills: Tremendous Temptation, Huge Frauds

The Right Focus on Tort Reform

30-Day Low Carb Diet 'Ketosis Plan'

Beat that Fat

1000 Atkins Diet Recipes

Obesity and Weight Loss

Recipes from the Heartland



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