

NHA/WASHINGTON

update*

Back to the Future?

NDI may wipe out every nutritional supplement advancement since 1994.

Can you believe the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) is almost 20 years old? Since Congress passed DSHEA in 1994, the act has protected our right to take nutritional supplements by classifying them as foods. In its approval of DSHEA, Congress concluded, “Preventive health measures, including education, good nutrition and appropriate use of safe nutritional supplements, will limit the incidence of chronic [health problems] and reduce long-term healthcare expenditures.”

We hope Congress remembers this quote. Because the FDA’s New Dietary Ingredient (NDI) guidelines gambit may destroy all that DSHEA has achieved—replacing natural health breakthroughs with supplements that were “cutting-edge” back in the 1980s and early 1990s.

Science Improves Nutrition

Since 1994, the natural health industry has made tremendous strides in realizing Congress’s vision of better health and lower healthcare expenditures. Driven by innovation, supplement manufacturers made formulas more effective with each passing year. The industry created new combinations and forms of nutrients, achieving greater potency and purity. Companies discovered how to make nutrition more bioavailable and easier to absorb. New extraction methods emerged to pull more active ingredients from natural sources than ever before. Even new health-enhancing nutrition sources were brought to light, such as

bioidentical compounds and new probiotic strains.

Under the NDI guidelines proposed by the FDA, each and every one of these post-DSHEA advancements would be wiped off the face of the planet. Any nutritional supplements



using techniques, technologies or ingredients discovered after 1994 would be recalled. This amounts to thousands of different products. Health food store shelves would be empty. People who had been enjoying better health through the use of these new-and-improved supplements would be out of luck.

NDI Is Anti-Innovation

A perfect example of a relatively new supplement that would be recalled by NDI as now proposed is ubiquinol, the active form of CoQ10. While science has known about ubiquinol for a long time, it has only been available as a nutritional supplement since 2006. It took decades of scientific advancements to figure out how to supply this

super-antioxidant in a stable form for supplements. But under the FDA’s proposed NDI guidelines, since the ubiquinol breakthrough occurred after 1994, the supplement should be pulled from store shelves immediately.

Doesn’t this seem backwards? Shouldn’t we be making sure that the latest health-enhancing nutritional advancements are made available to the public? There have been innumerable advancements since 1994, all of which hold the potential to make nutritional supplements more safe, effective and affordable than at any point in history. So what reasoning could possibly justify the NDI guidelines that would send us back in time, only allowing us supplements from the era of Pac-Man and legwarmers?

NDI has been simmering on the back burner, with the FDA allegedly cooking up a revision of the destructive draft. But now it’s time to turn off the flame and throw the whole pot in the trash. Take action today, and call or fax your local elected officials. Remind them that Congress once pledged to protect DSHEA—not destroy it. Let your elected officials know that any revised NDI Draft Guidance must be in accordance with the rules of DSHEA. Better still, ask your elected officials to shut down NDI once and for all. When our elected officials understand how NDI works against the health innovation that enhances our very lives, they will stand strong in defense of DSHEA. The supplement industry is continuing to gather forces to stop NDI altogether, so stay tuned—visit NHA2013.com for more information. ♦

*This editorial is a public service announcement sponsored by the Nutritional Health Alliance (NHA).