

Commonly used muscle-building dietary supplements are under regulated in Canada, finds study

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A new policy analysis, published in the journal *Performance Enhancement & Health*, highlights several gaps in current Canadian

policy regulating muscle-building dietary supplements. Muscle-building dietary supplements, including whey protein, creatine monohydrate, and amino acids, are used based on purported benefits to muscular growth and recovery. These products are regulated by the Natural Health Products Regulations under Health Canada.

"We identified many gaps in the current policy that put [young people](#) at risk," reported Kyle T. Ganson, Ph.D., MSW, assistant professor at the University of Toronto's Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work.

"Namely, there lacks a serious and consistent method of ensuring manufacturing sites and products are safe and unadulterated or contaminated."

The authors underscore the need for greater regulations given their prior [research](#) that has documented over 80% of boys and young men report using [whey protein](#) and over 50% report using creatine monohydrate.

"These [dietary supplements](#) are widely available and easily accessible despite the potential for being adulterated with banned substances," continued Ganson. "We also know that use of muscle-building dietary supplements is linked with eating disorders, muscle dysmorphia, illicit substance use, and future use of anabolic-androgenic steroids."

The authors provide a number of pre- and post-market recommendations to strength policy to protect the health and well-being of Canadians.

"Several strategies may be used to deter use, such as imposing a tax to these supplements, as well as restricting sale to those under 18 years old," noted Ganson.

The authors also recommend enhanced pre- and post-market testing of manufacturing sites and products, increased ability for Health Canada to recall products, and improved monitoring of adverse events.

More information: Kyle T. Ganson et al, Assessing Canadian regulation of muscle-building supplements: Identifying gaps and recommendations for improvement to protect the health and well-being of young people, *Performance Enhancement & Health* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/j.peh.2023.100255](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.peh.2023.100255)

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