Nutrition Supplement Policy

Philosophy:

It is the philosophy of University Recreation & Wellness (RecWell) at Northern Illinois University that students are able to meet 100% of their nutritional needs through a well-balanced, nutritious eating plan. Nutrition supplements are heavily marketed for their ability to enhance health, build muscle mass, speed recovery, and improve overall performance in spite of inadequate scientific evidence to make such claims. As a result, they are often misused.

We understand that physicians prescribe dietary supplements due to diagnosed deficiencies, and students should follow that advice in those circumstances. Our primary concern is that many students use supplements despite the lack of long-term studies to support their efficacy or safety and without medical advice.

In the US, the Dietary Supplements and Health Education Act of 1994 allows supplement manufacturers to make health claims regarding the effect of products on body structure or function but not therapeutic claims to “diagnose, mitigate, treat, cure, or prevent” a specific disease or medical condition. As long as a special supplement label indicates the active ingredients and the entire ingredients list is provided, claims for enhanced performance can be made, valid or not. Although all manufacturers are required by the Food and Drug Administration to analyze the identity, purity, and strength of all of their products’ ingredients, they are not required to demonstrate the safety and efficacy of their products. Additionally, contamination of dietary supplements with potentially harmful substances remains an issue. Ingredients may be mislabeled, may provide a different level of potency than stated, or may contain substances not listed. All of these can result in harmful health effects.

Policy:

1) It is the policy of RecWell at Northern Illinois University to promote food as the fundamental basis of our nutrition messaging.

2) Nutrition supplements will not be marketed to students within RecWell.

3) Requests to market foods and nutrition products to students at RecWell must be evaluated and approved by the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist.