ArimaDex Maker Pulls Supplement From The Market

By ACSH Staff — September 21, 2010

Following an FDA investigation which found trace amounts of a contaminant — an aromatase inhibitor — in the “muscle building” supplement ArimaDex, the manufacturer Genetic Edge Technology voluntarily pulled the supplement off the market [1]. Aromatase inhibitors are a class of drugs that block the synthesis of estrogen, which have been used in the treatment of breast and ovarian cancer in postmenopausal women. Adverse side effects following prolonged use in males may include decreased rate of bone growth, decreased sperm production, infertility, aggressive behavior, adrenal insufficiency, kidney failure, and liver dysfunction.

ACSH's Dr. Josh Bloom questions what a cancer drug might be doing in a bottle of a nonprescription muscle building supplement. “I'm curious about a number of things. How did aromatase inhibitors get in there, and does one really want to increase testosterone levels since this is associated with a real risk of prostate cancer, among other effects?”

ACSH's Dr. Elizabeth Whelan adds, “This is just one more piece of evidence that demonstrates how completely unregulated supplements are. Manufacturers can put anything in there, leaving us to go around asking the same questions we are now.”

“Even though the trace levels of aromatase inhibitors found were not likely to be toxic, you can find real toxins in other supplements — poisons in other words,” adds ACSH's Dr. Gilbert Ross.

“This is just another example of an unknown substance with unknown components of questionable utility being sold like candy in malls,” says Dr. Bloom.

This story should serve a warning to the public that the real health risk doesn’t come from the BPA found in plastic bottles and other chemical scares, but from the unknown toxins found in unregulated supplements, says Dr. Whelan.