

Another Day Ending in Y, Another Crappy Supplement



By Josh Bloom — April 11, 2016

Well, *here's* a big surprise. Yet another "dietary supplement" that is neither dietary nor a supplement has been targeted by the FDA. Yawn.

Actually, "yawn" is exactly the wrong word to describe oxilofrine, since it is a stimulant that will keep you awake. It is not only a *drug*, but an illegal one to boot.

Someone wanna give me a good reason that it should be sold in vitamin shops and supermarkets?

Time's up. Didn't think so. But I can tell you why it *shouldn't* be— something I have done many times before, for example, on the [American Council website](#) ^[1] (this one got me a death threat, which was kind of cool); on the [Science 2.0](#) ^[2] site; in [Forbes](#) ^[3]; and in a [press release](#) ^[4] from New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman when announcing a major crackdown on GNC, Target, Walgreens and Walmart because they were selling defective supplements.

It's because of the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act of 1994 (DSHEA), which allows untested, unregulated drugs to be sold as food. [From the NIH](#) ^[5]: "Except for purposes of section 201(g), a dietary supplement shall be *deemed to be a food* within the meaning of this Act."

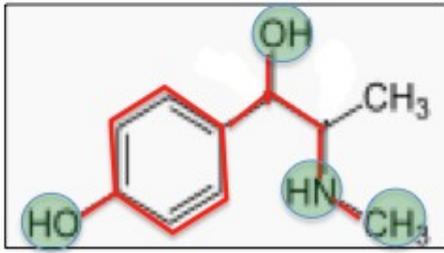
Some people out there must have some mighty strange diets, because the following "foods" have [made it into the news](#) ^[6] lately:

- Apexxx tablets, a dietary supplement for male sexual enhancement contained sildenafil, aka Viagra. (12/15)
- La' Trim Plus, Jenesis and Oasis, all from BeeXtreme LLC contained sibutramine (a prescription drug in the amphetamine class) and phenolphthalein (a laxative that is no longer used due to safety concerns). (12/15)
- SmartLipo365, contains sibutramine, phenolphthalein, and desmethylsibutramine tossed in just for laughs. (12/15)
- Pink Bikini White powder capsules contained diclofenac, aka Voltaren — a powerful non-steroidal antiinflammatory drug (NSAID), which can not only chew up your stomach, but also significantly increase the chance of heart attack at high doses. (12/15)
- Lipo Escultura (all weight loss products) contained both diclofenac and sibutramine. (12/15)

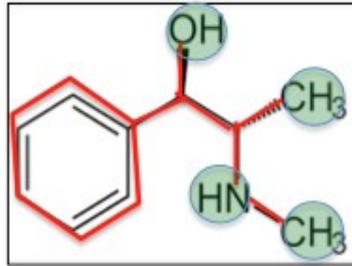
Note the dates. All five of these "foods" were pulled off the market in a *single month*. Five supplements that contained a combined total of three prescription drugs, one unapproved drug and a dangerous laxative.

Damn, that industry sure runs a clean shop.

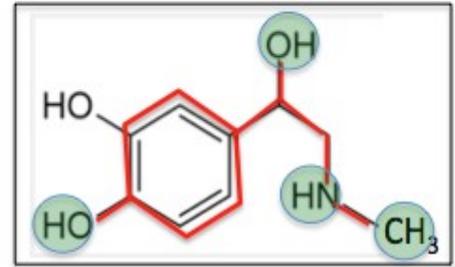
So, it can hardly be surprising that we have another (oxilofrine, aka methylsynephrine). This one has some interesting properties, which should be no coincidence given the following:



Oxilofrine



Ephedrine



Epinephrine (adrenaline)

It does not require a degree in chemistry to see the similarity of the structures of these three stimulants. Although similarity in structure does not guarantee that molecules will have similar pharmacological effects, when there is such a good match, it is likely that they will at least share some physiological effects. That is the case here:

Oxilofrine

Elevated heart rate
Elevated blood pressure
Cardiac arrest
Vomiting
Agitation

Epinephrine

Elevated heart rate
Elevated blood pressure
Arrhythmias
Vomiting
Panic attacks
Tremor
Headache
Sweating

Ephedrine

Elevated heart rate
Elevated blood pressure
Arrhythmias
Vomiting
Difficulty in urination
Insomnia
Sweating
Dizziness
Overdose deaths

So,

here we go again. More crappy, dangerous supplements, yet people keep buying them. Given that this charade goes on and on, and the obvious musical theme of this article, it would be simply wrong not to end this with ...

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[1] <http://acsh.org/news/2016/01/13/kratom-the-supplement-that-will-kill-godzilla/>

[2] http://www.science20.com/pfired_but_still_kicking/what_the_hell_is_gnc_selling_now-154680

[3] <http://www.forbes.com/sites/henrymiller/2016/02/24/poorly-regulated-herbal-supplements-could-be-your-worst-nightmare/#6f06cb664344>

[4] <http://www.ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-agreement-gnc-implement-landmark-reforms-herbal-supplements>

[5] https://ods.od.nih.gov/About/DSHEA_Wording.aspx

[6] <http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm490309.htm>