

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 8, 2001

Vice Admiral Richard A. Nelson
Surgeon General of the Navy
2300 E St., NW
Washington, DC 20372-5300

Dear Admiral Nelson:

Several weeks ago, our staff met with representatives from your office regarding the use of dietary supplements by active duty personnel. In that meeting, your staff indicated that the Navy has decided to proactively educate active duty personnel about the risks of dietary supplements. In addition, your staff stated that Navy physicians are now required to ask their patients about supplement use when they perform annual physical exams.

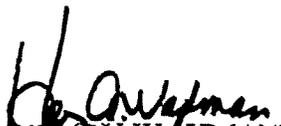
As members of the House Armed Services and Government Reform Committees, we are very interested in the impact of dietary supplements on readiness and the health of our service men and women. Specifically, we would like to know:

1. What is the incidence of use of supplements among active duty personnel?
2. What specific types of supplements are they using?
3. What is the incidence rate of adverse events from these supplements?
4. What is the severity of adverse events and which products are responsible for the more serious events?
5. What quantity, if any, of dietary supplements is sold in commissaries and concession stores on base?

We appreciate the actions you have already taken to educate Navy personnel about supplement use, and look forward to your prompt response. If you have any questions, please contact Jennette Lawrence at (202)225-2040 or Sarah Despres at (202) 225-5420.

Sincerely,


 SUSAN A. DAVIS
 Member of Congress


 HENRY W. WAXMAN
 Member of Congress