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3  
4 IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON

5 FOR THE COUNTY OF MULTNOMAH

15CV28591

6 STATE OF OREGON, *ex rel.* ELLEN F.  
7 ROSENBLUM, in her official capacity as  
Attorney General for the State of Oregon,

8 Plaintiff,

9 v.

10 GENERAL NUTRITION CORPORATION,

11 Defendant.

Case No.

COMPLAINT

Oregon Unlawful Trade Practices Act  
ORS 646.605 *et seq.*

**CLAIM NOT SUBJECT  
TO MANDATORY ARBITRATION**

**ORS 20.140 - State fees deferred at filing**

12 **INTRODUCTION**

13 This is a lawsuit by Ellen F. Rosenblum, Attorney General of Oregon, against General  
14 Nutrition Corporation (“GNC” or “Defendant”) for violations of Oregon’s Unlawful Trade  
15 Practices Act (“UTPA”). Defendant repeatedly violated the UTPA by misrepresenting that  
16 various products that GNC sold in Oregon were lawful dietary supplements when in fact these  
17 products were adulterated and unlawful because they contained either picamilon<sup>1</sup> or BMPEA,<sup>2</sup>  
18 potentially dangerous ingredients that do not meet the legal definition of a dietary ingredient and  
19 may not be lawfully used in dietary supplements. Picamilon is a synthetic chemical designed to  
20 cross the blood brain barrier and is a prescription drug used in some countries but not the United  
21 States to treat various neurological conditions. BMPEA is a synthetic chemical similar to  
22

23 \_\_\_\_\_  
24 <sup>1</sup> Picamilon is also known as nicotinoyl-GABA, pycamilon, picamilone, pikatropin, and  
pikamilon.

25 <sup>2</sup> BMPEA is also known as ,  $\beta$ MePEA, R-beta-methylphenethylamine, R-beta-  
26 methylphenethylamine HCl, Beta-methylphenethylamine,  $\beta$ -methylphenethylamine, 1-amino-2-  
phenylpropane, 2-phenylpropan-1-amine, 2-phenylpropylamine, alpha-benzylethylamine, 1-  
phenyl-1-methyl-2-aminoethane, Beta-methylbenzeneethanamine., Beta-phenylpropylamine, 2-  
phenyl-1-propanamine.

1 amphetamine that is banned by the World Anti-Doping Organization. In addition to selling  
2 products that were labeled as containing picamilon and BMPEA, Defendant sold products that it  
3 knew or should have known had been spiked with BMPEA, without disclosing in the product's  
4 label that the product contained this unlawful ingredient.

5 As a result of its repeated violations of the UTPA, GNC is liable for civil penalties,  
6 injunctive relief, restitution, disgorgement, and other appropriate relief, as set forth below.

7 **PARTIES**

8 1. Ellen F. Rosenblum is the Attorney General for the State of Oregon and sues in her  
9 official capacity pursuant to ORS 646.605(5) and ORS 646.632(1).

10 2. General Nutrition Corporation is incorporated under the laws of Pennsylvania with  
11 its principal place of business located at 300 Sixth Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. GNC  
12 describes itself as a leading global retailer of health and wellness products, including vitamins,  
13 minerals, dietary supplement products, sports nutrition products and diet products. Its products are  
14 sold under GNC proprietary names and under third-party names in company owned retail stores and  
15 in franchise stores located across the United States, including in Oregon.

16 **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

17 3. The claims described in this Complaint arise from sale in Oregon by GNC of  
18 putative dietary supplements.

19 4. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant pursuant to ORCP 4 A(4) and  
20 ORCP 4 L. Defendant has engaged in substantial activity in this state, and jurisdiction is not  
21 inconsistent with the Oregon Constitution or the United States Constitution.

22 5. Defendant was given the notice required by ORS 646.632(2) that it has allegedly  
23 violated the UTPA and the relief to be sought.

24 6. Defendant failed to deliver an Assurance of Voluntary Compliance that complies  
25 with the requirements of ORS 646.632(3).

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1           14.     GNC reviews the scientific literature on many of the ingredients used in third-  
2 party products. For example, on December 8, 2014, an e-mail exchange between Jennifer Jakel,  
3 GNC's Senior Project Manager for Technical Research, and Christina Middleton, Associate  
4 Project Manager, discussed the scientific literature "regarding the ingredients from 3<sup>rd</sup> party  
5 products." Based on Ms. Middleton's review of the literature, Ms. Jakel decided which  
6 ingredients "looked promising" for possible development by Nutra Manufacturing ("Nutra"),  
7 GNC's manufacturing arm. Nutra manufactures and supplies vitamins and supplements to  
8 General Nutrition Centers and to other third-party companies.

9           15.     GNC's third-party vendor agreement provides that the "Vendor Warrants that the  
10 Goods covered by this purchase order have been manufactured, packaged, stored and shipped in  
11 accordance with the applicable standards of Good Manufacturing Practices promulgated under  
12 the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. §301 ET SEQ, hereinafter "the Act") and  
13 requirements of all applicable federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations." Based on this  
14 language, GNC maintains that it is not liable for unlawful third-party vendor products sold at  
15 GNC stores or sold by GNC over the Internet. However, at least for products that contain  
16 picamilon or BMPEA, although GNC received guarantees from third-party vendors that products  
17 containing these ingredients complied with legal requirements, GNC did not rely on these  
18 guarantees in good faith, because GNC knew or should have known that these ingredients were  
19 unlawful, and that products containing these ingredients are deemed to be adulterated.

20           16.     GNC represents on its website that "GNC sets the standard in the nutritional  
21 supplement industry by demanding truth in labeling, ingredient safety and product potency, all  
22 while remaining on the cutting-edge of nutritional science," and that "GNC requires its vendors  
23 to be honest, ethical, reliable and capable of providing products that meet our high standards of  
24 quality." Unfortunately, GNC's representations are untrue. As described below, GNC sells  
25 products obtained from third-party vendors that GNC knows or should know contain unlawful  
26

1 and potentially unsafe ingredients and GNC sells third-party products that GNC knows, or  
2 should know, have labels that are deceptive.

### 3 Picamilon

4 17. Picamilon was developed by researchers in the former Soviet Union and is  
5 currently a prescription drug in Russia used to treat a variety of neurological conditions. It has  
6 never been approved as a prescription or over-the-counter drug in the United States.

7 18. Picamilon is a neurotransmitter (gamma-aminobutyric acid or GABA) that has  
8 been synthetically modified in order to facilitate its translocation across the blood-brain barrier.  
9 Picamilon is formed by synthetically combining nicotinic acid (niacin) with GABA. There is no  
10 indication in the literature that this compound is found in nature.

11 19. A “dietary ingredient” under section 201(ff)(1) of the Act is “(A) a vitamin; (B) a  
12 mineral; (C) an herb or other botanical; (D) an amino acid; (E) a dietary substance for use by  
13 man to supplement the diet by increasing the total dietary intake; or (F) a concentrate,  
14 metabolite, constituent, extract, or combination of any ingredient described in clause (A), (B),  
15 (C), (D), or (E).” 21 U.S.C. §321(ff)(1).

16 20. Picamilon does not fit any of the dietary ingredient categories in section  
17 201(ff)(A)-(F) of the Act. (Ex.1, Decl. of FDA Acting Deputy Director, Division of Dietary  
18 Supplement Programs, Dr. Cara Welch.) Thus picamilon is not a lawful dietary ingredient and  
19 products that contain picamilon are not lawful dietary supplements and may not be lawfully sold  
20 in the United States. Under the Act, products that contain picamilon are deemed to be  
21 adulterated.

22 21. GNC’s manufacturing arm Nutra does not manufacture products that contain  
23 picamilon, presumably because GNC knows that picamilon is not a lawful dietary ingredient. GNC  
24 obtains products that contain picamilon for sale in GNC stores through third-party vendors.

25 22. As early as May 22, 2007, GNC knew that picamilon is not a lawful dietary  
26 ingredient. On that date, GNC’s Senior Project Manager for Technical Research Jennifer Jakel,

1 whose responsibilities include ensuring that labeling and scientific claims are accurate, reviewed the  
2 available literature regarding picamilon.

3 23. All the documents reviewed by Ms. Jakel had been translated from Russian. Among  
4 the documents reviewed by Ms. Jakel was a review of picamilon, which among other things  
5 describes picamilon as one of “a new class of medicinal preparations called nootropics which are  
6 finding increasingly wider applications in various areas of medicine. Nootropic medications are  
7 adopted successfully for breakdowns of memory, attention, learning, and for treatment of loss of  
8 brain blood circulation, brain trauma, chronic alcoholism and other disorders.” (Ex. 2.)

9 24. Ms. Jakel also learned from this same document that picamilon was “synthesized in  
10 1969 by the All-Union Scientific Research Institute and studied in the NII pharmacological RAN.  
11 By chemical structure picamilone is a derivative of the gamma-amino-butyric acid and nicotinic  
12 acid.” (Underlined by Ms. Jakel). Thus, as early as early as May 22, 2007, GNC knew that  
13 picamilon was a synthetic drug created by Soviet investigators and was not a lawful dietary  
14 ingredient in the United States.

15 25. GNC also knew that picamilon is not a lawful dietary ingredient because as part of  
16 her May 2007 review, Ms. Jakel documented in the GNC library file on picamilon: “No NDI that  
17 I could find.”

18 26. An NDI or new dietary ingredient notification is required by federal law before a  
19 dietary ingredient not used in the United States before 1994, may be used in a dietary  
20 supplement. The NDI must be submitted 75 days before the ingredient is sold and must include  
21 information that supports the manufacturer or distributors belief that the product is safe. Only if  
22 FDA takes no action during the 75-day period may the new dietary ingredient be used in dietary  
23 supplements sold in the United States.

24 27. In April 2014, Ms. Jakel again looked for an NDI for picamilon and documented  
25 in her file “still no NDI found.” (Ex. 3.)

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1 28. Even if GNC did not actually know that picamilon is not a lawful dietary ingredient  
 2 (and it did), had GNC conducted a reasonable due diligence review, GNC would have known that  
 3 picamilon did not fulfill dietary ingredient categories in section 201(ff)(A)-(F) of the Act.

4 29. When GNC sells products that contain picamilon in Oregon, GNC represents that  
 5 the product is a lawful dietary supplement that contains lawful dietary ingredients.

6 30. Despite the fact that GNC knew, or should have known, that picamilon was a  
 7 prescription drug used in Russia and not a lawful dietary ingredient in the United States, and that  
 8 products that contain picamilon are not lawful dietary supplements, GNC sold thousands of units  
 9 of products in Oregon that contained picamilon. These products were falsely labeled and sold as  
 10 if they were lawful dietary supplements when in fact, they were not. Between January 2013 and  
 11 June 2015, GNC sales of products that contain picamilon were as follows:

12 **Picamilon Sales in Oregon, January 2013–June 2015**

Description	Vendor	Total Units Sold (Web)
Charge Extreme Energy Booster	Labrada Bodybuilding Nutrition	4
Lean Body for Her Fat Burner	Labrada Bodybuilding Nutrition	9
Lean Body Hi Energy Fat Burn	Labrada Bodybuilding Nutrition	8
Testek	QNT International, Inc.	13 (8)
Riptek V2	QNT International, Inc.	2 (1)
Tru Mangodrin	Truderma, LLC	26 (4)
Turbo Shred	Swole Sports Nutrition	12 (9)
Jacked Pack	BD Health Partners	100 (3)
Mr. Hyde – Fruit Punch	Prosupps USA LLC	808 (7)
Mr. Hyde – Watermelon	Prosupps USA LLC	1,037 (6)
Dr. Jekyll – Power Punch	Prosupps USA LLC	226 (3)
Dr. Jekyll – Watermelon	Prosupps USA LLC	218
Mr. Hyde – Orange Guava	Prosupps USA LLC	1
Vanish Bonus	Prosupps USA LLC	25 (14)
Mr. Hyde – Red Razz	Prosupps USA LLC	48
Mr. Hyde RTD Blue Razz	Prosupps USA LLC	65
Mr. Hyde – Blue Razz	Prosupps USA LLC	120
Mr. Hyde RTD Fruit Punch	Prosupps USA LLC	69
Nirvana	Sensatus Group LLC	18
ENGN Fruit Punch	Evlution Nutrition	58 (5)
ENGN Blue Raz	Evlution Nutrition	88 (4)
ENGN Green Apple	Evlution Nutrition	55
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3,010 (64)</b>

1 31. On June 16, 2015, pursuant to ORS 646.618, Plaintiff issued an Investigative  
2 Demand to GNC Holdings, Inc., (Defendant's parent company) which demanded production of  
3 documents and information relating to Defendant's sale of picamilon. The Investigative Demand  
4 clearly discussed the likelihood that picamilon was not a lawful dietary ingredient. Defendant was  
5 aware that GNC Holdings, Inc., was in receipt of the demand, and Defendant produced documents  
6 and information in response to the demand. Despite this additional notice to GNC that picamilon is  
7 an unlawful ingredient and that products which contain picamilon are adulterated, GNC continued  
8 to sell products that contain picamilon nationally and in Oregon. GNC did not cease selling such  
9 products until after Plaintiff issued a document entitled "Notice of Unlawful Trade Practices and  
10 Proposed Resolution" on September 21, 2015. It was only after this document was served on  
11 Defendant, that GNC stopped selling products that contain picamilon.

12 32. In addition to the sales listed above, between May 22, 2007 (when GNC knew that  
13 picamilon was not a lawful dietary ingredient) and January 1, 2013, and between June 2015 and the  
14 September 21, 2015, GNC sold a yet to be determine number of products that contained picamilon  
15 in Oregon.

16 **BMPEA**

17 33. BMPEA is a chemical similar to amphetamine. It was first synthesized in the 1930s  
18 as a replacement for amphetamine, but for unknown reasons it was never studied in humans. There  
19 are anecdotal reports that BMPEA is associated with hemorrhagic stroke.<sup>3</sup> Because of its  
20 amphetamine-like qualities, BMPEA is banned for use by athletes by the World Anti-Doping  
21 Agency.

22 34. BMPEA is not a lawful dietary ingredient because it does not fit any of the dietary  
23 ingredient categories in Section 201(ff)(A)-(F) of the Act. Under federal law, any dietary

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26 <sup>3</sup> P. Cohen et al, Hemorrhagic Stroke Probably Caused by Exercise Combined with a Sports Supplement Containing β-Methylphenylethymaline (BMPEA): A Case Report; Ann Intern Med. Published online 12 May 2015 doi;10.7326L15-0106



1 supplement that contains BMPEA is deemed to be adulterated and may not be lawfully sold in the  
2 United States.

3 35. GNC's manufacturing arm Nutra does not manufacture products that contain  
4 BMPEA, presumably because GNC knows that BMPEA is not a lawful dietary ingredient.  
5 However, GNC obtains products that contain BMPEA for sale in GNC stores through third-party  
6 vendors.

7 36. BMPEA is synthetically produced and not found naturally. Although there is one  
8 published report<sup>4</sup> that BMPEA is found naturally in the acacia rigidula ("AR") plant, this report  
9 provides little information regarding how the identification was made, and in 2013, FDA conducted  
10 a more credible analysis using a verified and well-accepted testing methodology that found AR does  
11 not, in fact, contain BMPEA. The FDA study also found that 43% of the dietary supplements tested  
12 that were labeled as containing AR had been "spiked" with BMPEA.<sup>5</sup> Among other things, the  
13 2013 study reported that BMPEA is a synthetic substance similar to amphetamine. Thus, anyone  
14 aware of the 2013 FDA study would know that BMPEA is not a lawful dietary ingredient and that  
15 products labeled as containing acacia rigidula were at significant risk of being spiked with BMPEA.

16 37. Even before the 2013 FDA study, GNC should have known that BMPEA is not a  
17 lawful dietary ingredient because BMPEA does not fit any of the dietary ingredient categories in  
18 Section 201(ff)(A)-(F) of the Act.

19 38. GNC knew of the FDA study as early as November 2, 2013, when GNC's Senior  
20 Project Manager for Technical Research Jennifer Jakel was notified by a PubMed service that the  
21 study was available on line.

22 39. On November 18, 2013, *USA Today* published an article about the FDA study.<sup>6</sup>

23 <sup>4</sup> B.A. Clement et al, , *Toxic amines and alkaloids from Acacia Rigidula*, *Phytochemistry*  
24 491998) 1377-1380

25 <sup>5</sup> Pawar et al, *determination of selected biogenic amines in acasia rigidula plant materials and*  
26 *dietary supplements us lc-MS/MS methods*; *Journal of Pharmaceutical and Biomedical analysis*  
88(2014 457466

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2013/11/18/fda-scientists-find-amphetamine-like-compound-in-dietary-supplements/3627963/> .

1           40.     The FDA study became widely known throughout GNC on November 19, 2013,  
2 when Ms. Jakel circulated the *USA Today* article to approximately 100 recipients at GNC  
3 headquarters. Among those recipients was GNC's Senior Vice President and Chief Innovation  
4 Officer Guru Ramanathan. GNC Vice President & General Counsel, Regulator Affairs David J  
5 Sullivan was another recipient of the *USA Today* article.

6           41.     The *USA Today* article stimulated significant concern and discussion within GNC.  
7 For example, within minutes of receiving the email from Ms. Jakel, Merchandising Manager Carter  
8 Gray wrote to GNC Director of Merchandising John Telencho, "Please tell me we won't have to get  
9 rid of acacia now." (Ex. 4.)

10          42.     Shortly after receiving the *USA Today* article, GNC Director of e-Commerce  
11 Nathaniel Kennedy learned of six products sold by GNC with acacia rigidula. Later that day, Brian  
12 Cavanaugh, GNC's Senior Vice President of Merchandising wrote to Steve Cherry, the Vice  
13 President of Purchasing, and David J. Sullivan, GNC's Vice President and General Counsel, and  
14 offered to do a "database search to find all SKUs" associated with effected products.

15          43.     Despite widespread knowledge that the AR products sold by GNC were at high risk  
16 of having been spiked with BMPEA, including knowledge by David J. Sullivan, GNC's Vice  
17 President & General Counsel, Regulatory Affairs, GNC continued to sell products that contained  
18 AR without testing these products to determine whether the product was adulterated with BMPEA  
19 or informing consumers of the risk that these products were adulterated.

20          44.     GNC also continued to sell products that were labeled as containing BMPEA even  
21 though it knew or should have known from the 2013 FDA study that BMPEA is a synthetic  
22 substance similar to amphetamine and was not a lawful dietary ingredient.

23          45.     Also after the 2013 FDA study, GNC approved inclusion of AR in products supplied  
24 to GNC by a third-party vendor. On February 21, 2014, supplier Riley Judd wrote to GNC  
25 employee Russell Barba that "Rhino Rush is currently reformulating the current ephedra version  
26

1 shot. To replace the ephedra, they would like to use Acacia Rigidula (leaves)-is this ingredient  
2 acceptable.” Barba then checked with GNC’s Beth Curtin who approved Rhino Rush’s use of AR.

3 46. On March 12, 2014, the Food Standards Agency of the European Union (EU)  
4 contacted GNC and other sellers of AR products to inform them that AR was a “novel food  
5 product” and could not be sold in the EU because, among other things, its safety had not been  
6 demonstrated.

7 47. In November 2014, the newsletter *NutraIngredients-USA*, reported that Danish and  
8 Swedish regulatory agencies had issued warnings that a dietary supplement labeled as containing  
9 AR that was spiked with BMPEA may have caused a hemorrhagic stroke. This newsletter was  
10 widely distributed throughout GNC headquarters.

11 48. In December 2014, Health Canada, (the Canadian equivalent to FDA) announced a  
12 recall of the AR labeled dietary supplement “Jet Fuel Superburn” because it was spiked with  
13 undisclosed BMPEA. At the time of the Health Canada recall, GNC sold Jet Fuel Superburn and  
14 other dietary supplements labeled as containing AR and at risk of containing BMPEA, and  
15 continued to sell those products in Oregon and the United States even after the Health Canada  
16 recall.

17 49. In April 2015, researchers reported the results of yet another study (“the Cohen  
18 study”) that found more than 50% of tested dietary supplements labeled as containing AR were  
19 spiked with BMPEA.<sup>7</sup> The list of products tested in the Cohen study that were found to contain  
20 undisclosed BMPEA included products sold by GNC in the United States and Oregon.

21 50. The Cohen study received significant national media attention. On April 23, 2015,  
22 after the results of the Cohen study became widely known, FDA formally announced that BMPEA  
23 does not meet the statutory definition of a dietary ingredient and sent warning letters to  
24 manufacturers whose products contain BMPEA.

25 \_\_\_\_\_  
26 <sup>7</sup> Cohen et al, *An amphetamine isomer whose efficacy and safety in humans has never been  
studied β-methylphenethylamine (BMPEA), is found in multiple dietary supplements*, Drug Test  
analysis DOI.1002/dta.1793

1           51.     It was only after FDA made its formal announcement that GNC stopped selling  
2 products which contain BMPEA, including products labeled as containing AR that were spiked with  
3 BMPEA.

4           52.     The Oregon Department of Justice (ODOJ) conducted its own testing of three  
5 dietary supplements sold by GNC in Oregon: Jetfuel Superburn, MX-LS7 and Phenyl Core Weight  
6 management. These products were labeled as containing AR but were not labeled as containing  
7 BMPEA. ODOJ's expert tested these products using a state-of-the-art methodology: rapid  
8 resolution liquid chromatography-accurate mass-quadrupole-time of flight-tandem mass  
9 spectrometry. All three products tested positive for BMPEA.

10          53.     When GNC sold products in Oregon that contained BMPEA, GNC misrepresented  
11 that the product was a lawful dietary supplement that only contained lawful dietary ingredients.

12          54.     From January 1, 2013, until May 2015, GNC sold in Oregon 340 units of seven  
13 different products that were labeled as containing AR. All but one of these products tested  
14 (Green Coffee Bean+Energy) tested positive for the presence of BMPEA.

15          55.     Whether Green Coffee Bean+Energy was adulterated with BMPEA is unknown  
16 because before it could be independently tested, the product was reformulated. On November  
17 19, 2013, in an email that included a *USA Today* news article following up on the November  
18 18th report about the FDA study, Charlie Chiaverini, the National Brand Manager for Rightway  
19 Nutrition (manufacturer of Green Coffee Bean+Energy), wrote to GNC employee Bob Emilian  
20 asking, "[O]bviously you would like us to reformulate as fast as possible and replace the  
21 inventory in the stores in warehouse with new inventory yes." Mr. Emilian replied, "Yes for  
22 starters."

23          56.     After November 2013, when GNC knew that AR products were at significant risk  
24 of having been adulterated with BMPEA, GNC sold at least 27 AR products in Oregon that were  
25 in fact adulterated with BMPEA.

1 57. In addition, GNC sold at least 105 AR products in Oregon after November 2013  
 2 without disclosing that these products were at significant risk of having been adulterated with  
 3 BMPEA.

4 58. The AR products sold in Oregon between January 2013 and May 2015 are as  
 5 follows:

6 **Acacia Rigidula Sales in Oregon, January 2013 – May 2015**

Description	Vendor	Total Units Sold (Web)	Units Sold 12/2013 & After
Hit Fastin XR	Hi Tech Pharmaceuticals	20	0
Lipodrene XR	Hi Tech Pharmaceuticals	1	0
Fastin XR DMAA Free	Hi Tech Pharmaceuticals	37	6
Jetfuel Superburn	World Health Products LLC	71 (10)	16
Green Coffee Bean + Energy	Rightway Nutrition	200 (5)	78
MX-LS7	Isatori Global Technologies	8	2
Phenylcore		3 (3)	3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>340 (18)</b>	<b>105</b>

13 59. In addition to the AR products sold by GNC that contained undisclosed BMPEA,  
 14 GNC also sold products that were labeled as containing BMPEA. These products were falsely  
 15 labeled as if they were a lawful dietary supplement, when in fact, they were not dietary  
 16 supplements because BMPEA is not a lawful dietary ingredient. Between January 1, 2013, and  
 17 May 2015, GNC sold the following products in Oregon that were labeled as contained BMPEA:

18 **BMPEA Sales in Oregon, January 2013–May 2015**

Description	Vendor	Total Units Sold (Web)	Units Sold 12/2013 & After
Fastin	Hi Tech Pharmaceuticals	17	0
Fastin DMAA Free	Hi Tech Pharmaceuticals	126 (39)	79
Meltdown Watermelon	VPX Sports, Inc.	142 (4)	61
Meltdown Peach Mango	VPX Sports, Inc.	9	0
Meltdown Exotic Fruit	VPX Sports, Inc.	4	0
Lipo 6 Black	Nutrex Research	20	0
Meltdown	VPX Sports, Inc.	27	6
Redline Ultra Hardcore Twinpk	VPX Sports, Inc.	2	0
Redline Ultra Hardcore Bonus	VPX Sports, Inc.	23	0
Redline Ultra Hardcore	VPX Sports, Inc.	430 (11)	287
Redline Hardcore Blister Pak	VPX Sports, Inc.	82	0

1	Fruit N.O. Shotgun	VPX Sports, Inc.	41	8
2	Grp Bgum Shotgun V3	VPX Sports, Inc.	9	1
3	Craze – Candy Grape	Driven Sports	331	0
4	Vanish Bonus	Prosupps USA LLC	25 (14)	25
5	Shredz Burner	Shredz Supplements	49 (21)	49
6	Iso Lean 2	Advanced Nutrition Systems	1 (1)	1
7	Iso Lean 3	Advanced Nutrition Systems	1 (1)	1
8	Methyl Drive 2.0	Advanced Nutrition Systems	1 (1)	1
9	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,340 (92)</b>	<b>519</b>

60. Prior to January 1, 2013, GNC sold a yet to be determined number of products in Oregon that contained BMPEA.

**CLAIMS FOR RELIEF**

61. All of Defendant’s violations of the UTPA set forth below were willful because Defendant knew or should have known that their conduct was in violation of the UTPA.

**FIRST CLAIM FOR RELIEF: ORS 646.608(1)(e)**

62. ORS 646.608(1)(e) makes it an unlawful trade practice to represent that goods have approval, characteristics, uses, benefits, or qualities that the goods do not have.

**COUNT 1**

**Misrepresenting that Products Containing Picamilon are Lawful Dietary Supplements**

63. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates each and every allegation contained in the preceding paragraphs as though set forth herein.

64. Defendant offered products for sale in Oregon that contained picamilon, and in so doing, represented that these products had the approval, characteristics, uses, benefits, or qualities of a lawful dietary supplement, when in fact, products that contain picamilon are not lawful dietary supplements.

65. Each and every instance in which Defendant offered a product for sale in Oregon as a dietary supplement when the product contained picamilon is a separate and distinct violation of ORS 646.608(1)(e).

1 **COUNT 2**

2 **Misrepresenting that Products Containing BMPEA are Lawful Dietary Supplements**

3 66. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates each and every allegation contained in the  
4 preceding paragraphs as though set forth herein.

5 67. Defendant offered products for sale in Oregon that contained BMPEA, and in so  
6 doing, represented that these products had the approval, characteristics, uses, benefits, or qualities of  
7 a lawful dietary supplement, when in fact, products that contain BMPEA are not lawful dietary  
8 supplements.

9 68. Each and every instance in which Defendant offered a product for sale in Oregon as  
10 a lawful dietary supplement when the product contained BMPEA is a separate and distinct violation  
11 of ORS 646.608(1)(e).

12 **COUNT 3**

13 **Misrepresenting that Picamilon is a Lawful Dietary Ingredient**

14 69. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates each and every allegation contained in the  
15 preceding paragraphs as though set forth herein.

16 70. Defendant listed picamilon as an ingredient in a product's label as if picamilon had  
17 the approval, characteristics, uses, benefits or qualities of a lawful dietary ingredient, when in fact,  
18 picamilon is not a lawful dietary ingredient.

19 71. Each and every instance in which Defendant sold a product in Oregon that listed  
20 picamilon as an ingredient is a separate and distinct violation of ORS 646.608(1)(e).

21 **COUNT 4**

22 **Misrepresenting that BMPEA is a Lawful Dietary Ingredient**

23 72. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates each and every allegation contained in the  
24 preceding paragraphs as though set forth herein.

25

26

1 73. Defendant listed BMPEA as an ingredient in a product's label as if BMPEA had the  
2 approval, characteristics, uses, benefits or qualities of a lawful dietary ingredient, when in fact,  
3 BMPEA is not a lawful dietary ingredient.

4 74. Each and every instance in which Defendant sold a product that listed BMPEA as an  
5 ingredient is a separate and distinct violation of ORS 646.608(1)(e).

#### 6 **COUNT 5**

#### 7 **Failure to Disclose that a Product Contained BMPEA**

8 75. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates each and every allegation contained in the  
9 preceding paragraphs as though set forth herein.

10 76. Defendant represented that a product had characteristics, uses, benefits, and qualities  
11 that it does not have when it sold products that contained BMPEA but did not list BMPEA as an  
12 ingredient.

13 77. Each and every instance in which Defendant sold a product in Oregon that contained  
14 BMPEA but did not list BMPEA as an ingredient is a separate and distinct violation of ORS  
15 646.608(1)(e).

#### 16 **COUNT 6**

#### 17 **Failure to disclose that Acacia Rigidula Products were at**

#### 18 **Significant Risk of Adulteration with BMPEA**

19 78. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates each and every allegation contained in the  
20 preceding paragraphs as though set forth herein.

21 79. Defendant represented that a product had characteristics, uses, benefits, and qualities  
22 that it does not have when it sold products that contained Acacia rigidula without disclosing that the  
23 product was at significant risk of adulteration with BMPEA.

24 80. Each and every instance after Defendant learned that its acacia rigidula products  
25 were at risk of adulteration with BMPEA, but failed to disclose the risk, is a separate and distinct  
26 violation of ORS 646.608(1) (e).



1                                    **SECOND CLAIM FOR RELIEF: ORS 646.608(1)(g)**

2            81.      ORS 646.608(1)(g) makes it an unlawful trade practice to represent that a product is  
3 of a particular standard, quality, or grade if it is of another.

4                                    **COUNT 7**

5                                    **Misrepresenting that Picamilon is a Lawful Dietary Ingredient**

6            82.      Plaintiff realleges and incorporates each and every allegation contained in the  
7 preceding paragraphs as though set forth herein.

8            83.      Each time Defendant sold a product in Oregon that listed picamilon as an ingredient  
9 on the product's label, Defendant misrepresented that picamilon had the standard, quality, or grade  
10 of a lawful dietary ingredient, when in fact, picamilon is not of this standard, quality, or grade.

11           84.      Each and every instance in which Defendant misrepresented that picamilon is a  
12 lawful dietary ingredient is a separate and distinct violation of ORS 646.608(1)(g).

13                                    **COUNT 8**

14                                    **Misrepresenting that BMPEA is a Lawful Dietary Ingredient**

15           85.      Plaintiff realleges and incorporates each and every allegation contained in the  
16 preceding paragraphs as though set forth herein.

17           86.      Each time Defendant sold a product in Oregon that listed BMPEA as an ingredient  
18 on the product's label, Defendant misrepresented that BMPEA had the standard, quality, or grade of  
19 a lawful dietary ingredient, when in fact, BMPEA is not of that standard, quality or grade.

20           87.      Each and every instance in which Defendant misrepresented in Oregon that BMPEA  
21 is a lawful dietary ingredient is a separate and distinct violation of ORS 646.608(1)(g).

22                                    **COUNT 9**

23                                    **Misrepresenting that Products Containing Picamilon are Lawful Dietary Supplements**

24           88.      Plaintiff realleges and incorporates each and every allegation contained in the  
25 preceding paragraphs as though set forth herein.

26



1 97. Each and every instance in which Defendant sold a product that listed picamilon as  
2 an ingredient without disclosing that picamilon is not a lawful dietary ingredient is a separate and  
3 distinct violation of ORS 646.608(1)(b).

4 **COUNT 12**

5 **Causing Confusion that Products that Contain Picamilon are**

6 **Approved or Certified as Lawful Dietary Supplements**

7 98. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates each and every allegation contained in the  
8 preceding paragraphs as though set forth herein.

9 99. Defendant caused a likelihood of confusion or of misunderstanding that products  
10 that contain Picamilon are approved or certified as lawful dietary supplements when Defendant  
11 offered for sale in Oregon any product that contained Picamilon, as if the product was a dietary  
12 supplement.

13 100. Each and every instance in which Defendant offered for sale as a dietary supplement  
14 any product that contained picamilon was a separate and distinct violation of ORS 646.608 (1)(b).

15 **COUNT 13**

16 **Causing Confusion that BMPEA is Approved or Certified as a Dietary Ingredient**

17 101. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates each and every allegation contained in the  
18 preceding paragraphs as though set forth herein.

19 102. Defendant caused likelihood of confusion or of misunderstanding that BMPEA is  
20 certified or approved as a dietary ingredient when it listed BMPEA as an ingredient on a products  
21 label without disclosing that BMPEA is not a lawful dietary ingredient.

22 103. Each and every instance in which Defendant sold a product that listed BMPEA as an  
23 ingredient is a separate and distinct violation of ORS 646.608 (1)(b).

1 **COUNT 14**

2 **Causing Confusion that Products Containing BMPEA are Lawful Dietary Supplements**

3 104. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates each and every allegation contained in the  
4 preceding paragraphs as though set forth herein.

5 105. Defendant caused a likelihood of confusion or of misunderstanding that products  
6 that contain BMPEA are lawful dietary products when they offered for sale in Oregon any product  
7 that contains BMPEA, as if the product was a dietary supplement.

8 106. Each and every instance in which Defendant offered for sale a product as if it were a  
9 dietary supplement when the product listed picamilon as an ingredient is a separate and distinct  
10 violation of ORS 646.608 (1)(b).

11 **FOURTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF: ORS 646.607(1)**

12 107. ORS 646.607(1) makes it an unlawful trade practice to engage in any  
13 unconscionable tactic in connection with the sale of goods.

14 **COUNT 15**

15 **Unconscionable Sales of Acacia Rigidula Products Spiked with BMPEA**

16 108. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates each and every allegation contained in the  
17 preceding paragraphs as though set forth herein.

18 109. Each and every instance in which Defendant sold an acacia rigidula product when  
19 Defendant knew there was a significant risk that the product was spiked with BMPEA, without  
20 disclosing to consumers that the product was at risk of adulteration, used an unconscionable tactic.

21 **COUNT 16**

22 **Unconscionable Sales of Products with the Unlawful Ingredient BMPEA**

23 110. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates each and every allegation contained in the  
24 preceding paragraphs as though set forth herein.

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6. A judgment granting any other and further relief as the court may deem appropriate.

DATED October 22, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

ELLEN F. ROSENBLUM  
Attorney General



DAVID A. HART, #002750  
Senior Assistant Attorney General  
Tel (971) 673-5002  
Fax (971) 673-5000  
David.Hart@doj.state.or.us  
Attorney for Plaintiff



DECLARATION OF DR. CARA WELCH

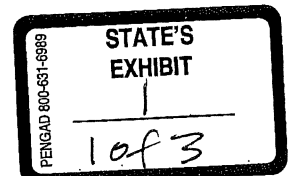
I, Dr. Cara Welch, declare as follows:

1. I am the Acting Deputy Director, Division of Dietary Supplement Programs (DDSP), Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN), United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA). In this capacity, I am responsible for the interpretation and application of relevant dietary supplement statute and regulations for the FDA's dietary supplement program office. This includes policies and programs involving regulatory compliance matters of significant importance to the dietary supplement industry regarding manufacturing and ingredient safety issues. The statements made in this declaration are based upon my personal knowledge and information about which I have become knowledgeable through my review of dietary supplement and ingredient issues.

2. Picamilon (pikatropin) is a neurotransmitter (gamma-aminobutyric acid, GABA) that has been synthetically modified in order to facilitate its translocation across the blood-brain barrier. Picamilon is formed by synthetically combining niacin with GABA. There is no indication in the literature that this compound is found in nature.

3. A "dietary ingredient" under section 201(ff)(1) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (the Act) is "(A) a vitamin; (B) a mineral; (C) an herb or other botanical; (D) an amino acid; (E) a dietary substance for use by man to supplement the diet by increasing the total dietary intake; or (F) a concentrate, metabolite, constituent, extract, or combination of any ingredient described in clause (A), (B), (C), (D), or (E)." 21 U.S.C. § 321(ff)(1).

4. Picamilon is not a vitamin. While picamilon may be synthesized from a vitamin (niacin), it is a different chemical entity. Picamilon is neither an organic substance nor a minor component of foods. Neither is picamilon essential for normal physiological functions. Picamilon is not produced endogenously in amounts adequate to meet normal physiologic needs



(and in fact, there is no physiologic need for picamilon), and there is no clinically defined deficiency syndrome associated with the absence or underutilization of picamilon. Thus, picamilon does not qualify as a dietary ingredient under section 201(ff)(1)(A) of the Act. 21 U.S.C. § 321(ff)(1)(A).

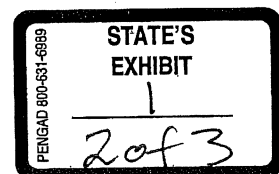
5. Picamilon is not a mineral as it does not provide a form or source of inorganic elements to the diet. Thus, picamilon does not qualify as a dietary ingredient under section 201(ff)(1)(B) of the Act. 21 U.S.C. § 321(ff)(1)(B).

6. Picamilon is not an herb or other botanical as it is not found in nature and is not a plant, alga, or fungus, nor an exudate thereof. Thus, picamilon does not qualify as a dietary ingredient under section 201(ff)(1)(C) of the Act. 21 U.S.C. § 321(ff)(1)(C).

7. Picamilon is not an amino acid. While picamilon contains an amino moiety along with a carboxylic acid, picamilon is a gamma-amino carboxylic acid, not an alpha-amino carboxylic acid. Additionally, picamilon is not a constituent of proteins. Thus, picamilon does not qualify as a dietary ingredient under section 201(ff)(1)(D) of the Act. 21 U.S.C. § 321(ff)(1)(D).

8. Picamilon is not a dietary substance for use by man to supplement the diet by increasing the total dietary intake. At my request, a diligent search of several food databases and scientific literature databases was conducted in August 2015 to identify food usage of picamilon. The search identified no food use of picamilon. In the absence of such a use, picamilon is not a dietary substance for use by man to supplement the diet by increasing the total dietary intake. Thus, picamilon does not qualify as a dietary ingredient under section 201(ff)(1)(E) of the Act. 21 U.S.C. § 321(ff)(1)(E).

9. Picamilon is not a concentrate, metabolite, constituent, extract, or combination of any ingredient described in section 201(ff)(1)(A), (B), (C), (D), or (E) of the Act. 21 U.S.C. § 321(ff)(1)(A), (B), (C), (D), or (E). While picamilon is a synthetically modified version of niacin and GABA, both dietary ingredients on their own, it is a different chemical entity. Picamilon is absorbed into the body and even crosses the blood-brain barrier and accumulates in





the brain as this separate chemical entity. If picamilon dissociates into GABA and niacin, it would be a precursor to, not a metabolite of, dietary ingredients. Therefore, picamilon does not qualify as a dietary ingredient under section 201(ff)(1)(F) of the Act. 21 U.S.C. § 321(ff)(1)(F).

10. Because picamilon does not does not fit any of the dietary ingredient categories in section 201(ff)(1)(A)-(F) of the Act [21 U.S.C. § 321(ff)(1)(A)-(F)], it is not a dietary ingredient as set forth in section 201(ff)(1) of the Act. 21 U.S.C. § 321(ff)(1).

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my information and belief.

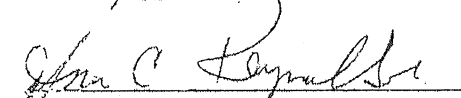
Executed on September 28, 2015

Cara Welch, Ph.D.  
Acting Deputy Director  
Division of Dietary Supplement Programs  
Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition  
U.S. Food and Drug Administration



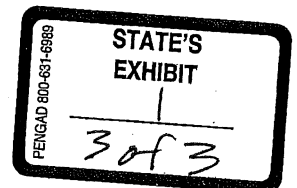
Cara Welch  
5100 Paint Branch Parkway  
Wiley Bldg, 4D-039  
College Park, MD 20740  
(240) 402-2333

Sworn to and subscribed  
before me this 28 day  
of September, 2015.



Notary Public

My commission expires:  
**ANA C. REYNOLDS**  
**NOTARY PUBLIC STATE OF MARYLAND**  
My Commission Expires January 16, 2016



# Picamilone

Translated from Russian

## Picamilone

The beginning of the 1970s and subsequent years is characterized by the appearance of a new class of medicinal preparations, called nootropics, which are finding increasingly wider applications in various areas of medicine. Nootropic preparations are applied successfully for breakdowns of memory, attention, learning, and for treatment of loss of brain blood circulation, brain trauma, chronic alcoholism and other disorders. Among the medicinal properties of this group a notable place is occupied by the domestic preparation picamilone, synthesized in 1969 by the All-Union Scientific Research Institute and studied in the NII pharmacological RAN. By chemical structure picamilone is a derivative of the gamma-amino-butyric acid (GABA) and nicotinic acid. Picamilone was introduced in medical practice in 1986, and to the present time has achieved sufficiently large experience in its application.

The great interest of clinicians in picamilone may be attributed to the unique combination of its pharmacological properties. It possesses high cerebrovascular activity, which exceeds the effect of cinnarizine, papaverine, xanthinol niacinate, and piracetam. One of the most important components in the spectrum of psychotropic activity is its nootropic effect, which determines its clinical use to a significant degree. Picamilone has a unique tranquilizing effect (the manifestation of action is inferior to diazepam); in this case picamilone does not cause a myorelaxation effect. The important property of picamilone is the ability to quickly restore mental and physical fitness for work, which was lost through overstress. Clinical experience with application of picamilone shows that it is effective for ischemic disturbances of cerebral blood circulation, discirculatory encephalopathy, vegetative dystonia, and for prevention and treatment of the simple form of migraine. Picamilone has proven an effective medicinal treatment for patients with disorders of a neurotic level, with accompanying manifestations of anxiety, fear, emotional and vegetative instability. Picamilone finds a use in the complex treatment of alcoholism and acute alcoholic intoxication. At this time the list of indications for prescription of picamilone is constantly growing. Clinical studies have shown that picamilone possesses favorable properties in ophthalmological practice in the treatment of primary open glaucoma, diseases of the retina and the optic nerve of vascular genesis. It has been adapted also in urological practice for treatment of neurological disorders of urination in children and adults. It is important to note that picamilone does not cause habituation, but its safety is proven for 10 years in wide and intensive clinical application. Picamilone is prescribed both in mono-preparation and in combination with other medicinal agents.

HOME

Galantamine

CDP Choline

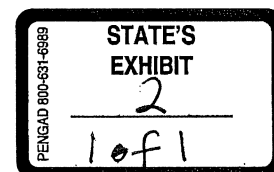
Idebenone

Piracetam

Deprenyl

Pyritinol

to Order



Picamilon

P. Kamilon

Nicotinyl-γ-aminobutyric Acid

(No ND I that I could find for a staple)  
Everything is in Russian

April 2014 - All new human studies since 2007 - all in Russian  
Still no ND I found

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STATE'S EXHIBIT  
3  
1 of 1  
PENGAD 800-651-6969

**Sender:** Carter Gray </O=GNC/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=SM1CJG>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 19, 2013 12:46:50 PM  
**Recipient:** John R. Telencho, Jr. <John-Telencho@gnc-hq.com>  
**Subject:** Fwd: USA Today - FDA mum on new drug in diet pills ; No warning given on 9 products that have speed-

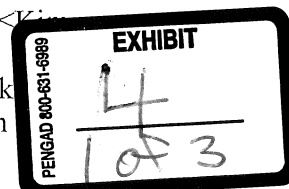
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Please tell me we won't have to get rid of acacia now...

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Jennifer Jakell <Jennifer-Jakell@gnc-hq.com>  
**Date:** November 19, 2013 at 7:22:41 AM EST  
**To:** David Sullivan <David-Sullivan@gnc-hq.com>, Gary Kelly <Gary-Kelly@gnc-hq.com>, Wendell Haymon <Wendell.Haymon@nutramfg.com>, Ali Barry <Alexandra-Barry@gnc-hq.com>, Alice Hirschel <Alice-Hirschel@gnc-hq.com>, Amy Davis <Amy-Davis@gnc-hq.com>, Andy Drexler <Andrew-Drexler@gnc-hq.com>, Anthony Phillips <Anthony-Phillips@gnc-hq.com>, April Schatschneider <April-Schatschneider@gnc-hq.com>, Beth Kitchen <Beth-Kitchen@gnc-hq.com>, Bob Emilian <Robert-Emilian@gnc-hq.com>, Brandi Spade <Brandi-Spade@gnc-hq.com>, Brian Cavanaugh <Brian-Cavanaugh@gnc-hq.com>, Brian Tolbert <Brian-Tolbert@gnc-hq.com>, Brooke Place <Brooke-Place@gnc-hq.com>, Carl Seletz <Carl-Seletz@gnc-hq.com>, Carmine Fortino <Carmine-Fortino@gnc-hq.com>, 'Caroline Underwood' <carolineu@discount-supplements.co.uk>, Carter Gray <Carter-Gray@gnc-hq.com>, "Celeste E. Lucanish" <Celeste-Lucanish@gnc-hq.com>, Celina Petronzi <Celina-Petronzi@gnc-hq.com>, Cheri Mullen <Cheri-Mullen@gnc-hq.com>, Christina Middleton <Christina-Middleton@gnc-hq.com>, Cody Kishur <Cody-Kishur@gnc-hq.com>, CS-OpsTeam <CS-OpsTeam@gnc-hq.com>, Daniel Winschel <Daniel-Winschel@gnc-hq.com>, Danielle Fortunato <Danielle-Fortunato@gnc-hq.com>, "Darryl V. Green" <Darryl-Green@gnc-hq.com>, David Florian <dflorian@gncfranchising.com>, David King <David-King@gnc-hq.com>, "David R. Sims" <David-Sims@gnc-hq.com>, Dennis Magulick <Dennis-Magulick@gnc-hq.com>, Erica Price <Erica-Price@gnc-hq.com>, Erin Catalina <Erin-Catalina@gnc-hq.com>, Fion Ge <fion-ge@gncintl.com>, "frankcostamd@msn.com" <frankcostamd@msn.com>, G Miller <gmiller@marketcompr.com>, Gilles Houde <Gilles-Houde@gnc-hq.com>, Glynn Perdue <Glynn-Perdue@gnc-hq.com>, Greg Szabo <Greg.Szabo@nutramfg.com>, Guru Ramanathan <Guru-Ramanathan@gnc-hq.com>, "gymnast2bb@yahoo.com" <gymnast2bb@yahoo.com>, James McBride <James-McBride@gnc-hq.com>, Jamie Garbowsky <Jamie-Garbowsky@gnc-hq.com>, Jane Xu <Jane-Xu@gncintl.com>, Jason Minear <jminear@gncfranchising.com>, "Jeffery W. Bost (jwbpac2@gmail.com)" <jwbpac2@gmail.com>, Jeffrey Del Favero <Jeffrey-DelFavero@gnc-hq.com>, "Jenna R. O'Connor" <Jenna-O'Connor@gnc-hq.com>, Jennifer Dawson <Jennifer-Dawson@gnc-hq.com>, Jennifer Gartin <Jennifer-Gartin@gnc-hq.com>, Jennifer Jakell <Jennifer-Jakell@gnc-hq.com>, Jennifer Murphy <Jennifer-Murphy@gnc-hq.com>, Jerry Stubenhofer <Gerald-Stubenhofer@gnc-hq.com>, Jim Burns <Jim-Burns@gnc-hq.com>, Jim Kane <James-Kane@gnc-hq.com>, Jim Terry <James.Terry@nutramfg.com>, Joanne Colacci <Joanne-Colacci@gnc-hq.com>, John Herman <John-Herman@gnc-hq.com>, "John R. Telencho, Jr." <John-Telencho@gnc-hq.com>, JT Smith <Joshua-Smith@gnc-hq.com>, "Judy A. Hufnagel" <Judy-Hufnagel@gnc-hq.com>, Justin Moore <Justin-Moore@gnc-hq.com>, Justin Villella <Justin-Villella@gnc-hq.com>, Kelly Merkle <Kelly-Merkle@gnc-hq.com>, Kim Borchert <Kim-Borchert@gnc-hq.com>, Kyle Wiederspan <Kyle-Wiederspan@gnc-hq.com>, L Brophy <lbrophy@marketcompr.com>, Lauren Green <Lauren-Green@gnc-hq.com>, Lauren Kanick <Lauren-Kanick@gnc-hq.com>, Lea Alfred <Lea-Alfred@gnc-hq.com>, Lindsay McKibben



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**Subject: USA Today - FDA mum on new drug in diet pills ; No warning given on 9 products that have speed-like compound**



NEWS

## **FDA mum on new drug in diet pills ; No warning given on 9 products that have speed-like compound**

Alison Young

Alison Young

Alison Young, USA TODAY,

489 words

19 November 2013

USA Today (Newspaper)

USAT

FINAL

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English

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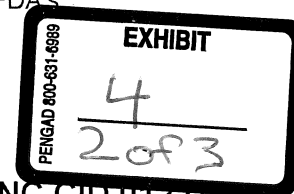
For the second time in recent weeks, scientists have found a "non- natural" amphetamine-like compound in dietary supplements -- yet federal regulators have issued no warnings to consumers about the ingredient.

Tests of 21 supposedly all-natural supplements by U.S. Food and Drug Administration scientists found nine products that contain the compound, according to their findings published in the Journal of Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Analysis.

All 21 of the supplements list an ingredient called Acacia rigidula, which is a bushy plant found in Texas and Mexico. The FDA scientists reported they couldn't find the substance in verified samples of the plant. The compound appears to have never been tested for safety on humans, they said.

FDA officials would not comment on their study or release the names of the nine supplements found to contain the compound, beta- methylphenethylamine. The Acacia rigidula supplements tested were marketed for such things as weight loss and energy, their paper said.

"This is a brand-new drug being placed into a number of supplements under the guise of a natural ingredient," Pieter Cohen, an assistant professor at Harvard Medical School, said after reading the FDA's paper.



CONFIDENTIAL

GNC CID 012275

Cohen was part of another research team that last month reported finding a methamphetamine-like compound in a pre-workout supplement called Craze. Cohen expressed dismay that the FDA hasn't issued any warnings to the public about Craze or the nine supplements flagged in the new research paper.

Acacia rigidula is listed as an ingredient in several weight loss and energy supplements made by Hi-Tech Pharmaceuticals of Norcross, Ga., including Fastin-XR, Stimerex and Lipodrene Hardcore. The company has had repeated run-ins over the years with federal regulators, records show.

The FDA announced Monday it seized \$2 million in supplements last week from Hi-Tech that contained a different stimulant ingredient: DMAA.

Hi-Tech President Jared Wheat said he has safely used Acacia rigidula in supplements for several years and the FDA has never mentioned concerns about it. Wheat says a 1998 journal article by Texas A&M scientists proves the compound is natural. "They're just absolutely wrong," Wheat said of the FDA scientists.

Wheat said he believes his company is the largest supplier of Acacia rigidula in the country and the chemical signatures published in the FDA's research paper indicate to him that six or seven of the nine flagged supplements are probably made by his company.

Amy Eichner of the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency said Acacia rigidula appears to be the latest in an industry trend of spiking supplements with stimulants.

Steve Mister of the Council for Responsible Nutrition a supplement industry group, said if there's a health risk, the FDA should name names and take swift enforcement action.

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