



## LifeScape Policy on Nutritional Supplements

Personalized medicine utilizes a variety of tools to assess and improve patient outcomes. These including establishing a collaborative relationship from the outset, ordering diagnostic testing as needed to get to roots of health or disease, offering lifestyle prescription including dietary support to optimize nutritional status, and suggesting supportive supplements. LifeScape utilizes an online supplement dispensary to offer customization of vetted supplements and discounted pricing for each patient.

### Patient Education on Nutritional Supplementation

- Supplements are largely unregulated since the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act of 1994
- *Anything put in the body to effect a change in physiology is a drug* and, as such, can have benefits, risks, or interaction risks with other medications or supplements
- Supplements support many physiologic processes but few have evidence proving cure of disease (even most proven pharmaceutical agents benefit only a small percentage of the patients treated...no drug is 100% safe or 100% effective.

### LifeScape Principles on Nutritional Supplements:

1. **Food First:** Aim to replete nutrient deficiencies via diet and lifestyle change whenever possible and by reevaluating medications or lifestyle considerations which may contribute to nutrient deficiency
2. **Strategic Use:** Aim to limit supplements to those proven deficient by objective lab testing or needed based on specific clinical issues
3. **Experienced & Educated Prescriber:** Supplements, like drugs, require guidance of a physician trained in biochemistry, physiology, pharmacology and toxicology who makes recommendations in context of your complete medical history and evaluates for potential supplement/medication interactions.
4. **Vetted Supplements:** Few supplement manufacturers perform high quality research. We have seen many instances where products purchased online were of poor quality or counterfeit. We do our best to recommend manufacturers publishing quality research and those certified by USP or NSF International, third party organizations that conduct testing on supplements to determine if what is on the label is actually in the bottle and that the product does not contain high levels of contaminants, such as heavy metals. We also monitor Consumerlabs.com and look for brands for which there is quality assessment and clinical research.
5. **Appropriate Dosing:** Many nutritional supplements are harmful in excess or have a narrow “therapeutic window” where they are safe and effective. Levels above or below this window can be harmful. We monitor nutrient levels when appropriate and scan supplements for overlap of nutrients to prevent excessive doses or toxicity.



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6. **Caution with Herbal Preparations:** Herbal supplements are chemically complex, difficult to standardize and have higher potential for adverse effects or interaction with other medications. Herbal products, particularly from India or China, can contain contaminants or have widely variable amounts of active ingredients.
7. **Caution with Hormone Supplementation:** Hormone prescribing should be a last resort only if lifestyle modification, sleep hygiene, healthy diet, minimizing alcohol use, and adopting routine stress management habits fails to resolve hormone-related symptoms. We exercise extreme caution in recommending animal glandular products given potential risk of prion-related neurodegenerative disease.
8. **Report adverse effects:** We report potential adverse effects from supplements or medications to the manufacturer and to Medwatch. [www.fda.gov/safety/medwatch-fda-safety-information-and-adverse-event-reporting-program](http://www.fda.gov/safety/medwatch-fda-safety-information-and-adverse-event-reporting-program)
9. **Continuous Learning:** We monitor evidence-based medical sites like Natural Medicine Comprehensive database [naturalmedicines.therapeuticresearch.com](http://naturalmedicines.therapeuticresearch.com) (summary of evidence based nutrient research for a health issue) and Consumer Lab [www.consumerlab.com](http://www.consumerlab.com) (for unbiased product purity, potency and accuracy testing) are critical resources we regularly monitor.