

## Dirty Dozen Supplements

These 12 supplements have been linked to serious adverse events or, in the case of glandular supplements, to strong theoretical risks. They're all readily available on the Web.

*Consumer Reports* has divided the dirty dozen into three categories: definitely hazardous, very likely hazardous, and likely hazardous.



NAME	ALSO KNOWN AS	DANGERS
<b>DEFINITELY HAZARDOUS</b>		
Aristolochic acid	Aristolochia, birthwort, snakeroot, snakeweed, sangree root, sangrel, serpentry, serpentaria, asarum canadense, wild ginger	Potent human carcinogen; kidney failure, sometimes requiring transplant; deaths reported.
<b>VERY LIKELY HAZARDOUS</b>		
Comfrey	Symphytum officinale, ass ear, black root, blackwort, bruisewort, consolidae radix, consound, gum plant, healing herb, knitback, knitbone, salsify, slippery root, symphytum radix, wallwort	Abnormal liver function or damage, often irreversible; deaths reported.
Androstenedione	4-androstene-3, 17-dione, andro, androstene	Increased cancer risk, decrease in HDL cholesterol. Banned by athletic associations. FDA warned 23 companies to stop manufacturing, marketing and distributing in March 2004.
Chaparral	Larrea divaricata, creosote bush, greasewood, hediondilla, jarilla, larreastat	Abnormal liver function or damage, often irreversible; deaths reported.
Germander	Teucrium chamaedrys, wall germander, wild germander	Abnormal liver function or damage, often irreversible; deaths reported.
Kava	Piper methysticum, ava, awa, gea, gi, intoxicating pepper, kao, kavain, kawa-pfeffer, kew, long pepper, malohu, maluk, meruk, milik, rauschpfeffer, sakau, tonga, wurzelstock, yagona, yangona	Abnormal liver function or damage, occasionally irreversible; deaths reported.
<b>LIKELY HAZARDOUS</b>		
Bitter orange	Citrus aurantium, green orange, kijitsu, neroli oil, Seville orange, shangzhou, zhiqiao, sour orange, zhi oiao, zhi xhi	High blood pressure; increased risk of heart arrhythmias, heart attack, stroke.
Organ/glandular extracts	Brain/adrenal/pituitary/placenta/other gland "substance" or concentrate	Theoretical risk of mad cow disease, particularly from brain extracts.
Lobelia	Lobelia inflata, asthma weed, bladderpod, emetic herb, gagroot, lobelie, indian tobacco, pukeweed, vomit wort, wild tobacco	Breathing difficulty, rapid heartbeat, low blood pressure, diarrhea, dizziness, tremors; possible deaths reported.
Pennyroyal oil	Hedeoma pulegioides, lurk-in-the-ditch, mosquito plant, pilioleria, pudding grass, pulegium, run-by-the-ground, squawmint, stinking balm, tickweed	Liver and kidney failure, nerve damage, convulsions, abdominal tenderness, burning of the throat; deaths reported.
Scullcap	Scutellaria lateriflora, blue pimpernel, helmet flower, hoodwort, mad weed, mad-dog herb, mad-dog weed, quaker bonnet, scutelluria, skullcap	Abnormal liver function or damage.
Yohimbe	Pausinystalia yohimbe, johimbi, yohimbehe, yohimbine	Change in blood pressure, heart arrhythmias, respiratory depression, heart attack; deaths reported.

News media can reprint this chart using the following citation: **Reprinted with permission from *Consumer Reports*, May 2004, [www.ConsumerReports.org](http://www.ConsumerReports.org).**