

Ephedra available once more following decision of federal judge in Utah.

Ephedra may be offered once more according to decision of federal judge. However, the FDA is appealing the decision.

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Ephedra is a herb used over 5000 years ago to treat several disorders, such as asthma and bronchitis. Because ephedra has the ability to increase metabolism, and burn fat it became a popular ingredient used in diet pills.

About 12 to 17 million people consumed ephedra in 1999, reports the American Herbal Products Association. The Nutrition Business Journal estimated that sales of ephedra in 2002 were \$1.25 billion

Ephedra is so powerful its safety was questioned the FDA removed ephedra also known by its Chinese name Ma-huang from the market in April 2004 claiming that it was responsible for dozens of deaths.

Judge Campbell states that drug agencies had failed to prove that ephedra at low doses was dangerous, and that it lacked the authority to ban the substance without such proof. She called for the FDA to lift the ban on ephedra.

The US ban on ephedra was reversed on 14, April 2005, among other things the court clarified that the FDA must follow the 1994 Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) and can not treat dietary supplements like drugs or medical devices.

According to the court, the FDA did not conclusively establish that low doses of ephedra pose significant or unreasonable risk by a preponderance of the evidence. Apparently, companies that sell ephedra based products are allowed to resume selling products with no more than 10mg of naturally occurring ephedrine alkaloids.

However, the FDA has appealed the decision and anyone taking ephedra should only do so with the written permission of their Doctor.

(The above press release has not been approved or reviewed by the Food and Drug Administration)

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