

FDA regulators prompt Hydroxycut recall

by Neka Sehgal - May 3, 2009

Washington, May 3: Reflecting on the link between Hydroxycut weight loss products and the subsequent development of liver damage and other potentially life-threatening [side effects](#), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is warning consumers to immediately stop using the products.

FDA warns dieters to stop using Hydroxycut weight-loss supplements.

Health issues reported

The FDA announced today that fourteen Hydroxycut weight-loss products have been recalled by Iovate Health Sciences USA Inc. According to Dr. Linda Katz, interim chief medical officer of the FDA's food and nutrition division said the agency has received 23 reports of liver problems

, including the death of a 19-year-old boy living in the Southwest.

Other symptoms reported are jaundice to liver failure. One person received a transplant and another is awaiting a new liver. The patients were otherwise healthy and their symptoms began after they started using Hydroxycut.

Some other health issues that have been reported include seizures, cardiovascular disorders and rhabdomyolysis (a kind of muscle damage). Ailments like jaundice, brown urine, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, weakness, stomach pain and loss of appetite have surfaced.

FDA's warning

Consumers who have the products are urged to stop using them and to return them or ask for a refund. "The FDA urges consumers to discontinue use of Hydroxycut products in order to avoid any undue risk. Adverse events are rare, but exist. Consumers should consult a physician or other health care professional if they are experiencing symptoms possibly associated with these products," said Linda Katz.

The crux of the problem is that dietary supplements are not strictly regulated by the government as medicines. There is no stringent rule for manufacturers to prove to the FDA that their products are safe and effective before retailing. But in recent times regulators monitor the markets for signs of trouble, and alert the FDA when they learn of problems.

Linda stated, "Part of the problem is that the FDA looks at dietary supplements from a post-market perspective, and an isolated incident is often difficult to follow."

Public health researcher Ano Lobb, who has studied Hydroxycut and other dietary supplements for Consumer Reports, said "You really have to be careful about dietary supplements, especially weight-loss pills. People believe that the FDA has verified that these products are at least safe and effective, and that's really not the case. When you see fantastic claims _ that's generally what they are."

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