

FRONTLINE Documentary: More Misleading Drama, Less Objective Facts

On January 19th, 2016, PBS' *FRONTLINE* aired a program called "**Supplements and Safety.**" Rather than provide a balanced, factual assessment, the *FRONTLINE* program delivered a biased, misleading report. Inaccurate reporting by the *FRONTLINE* program included:

1. *Dietary supplements were implied to be frequently manufactured in unsanitary conditions, without regard to documented safety procedures*

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Fact: Life Extension's dietary ingredients are sourced through reputable, ethical suppliers, tested by our Quality Control division with advanced analytical chemistry methods to ensure purity and potency, and manufactured under strict adherence to GMP.

2. *The FDA was implied to lack the authority and manpower to regulate dietary supplements to ensure safety*

Fact: Since the passage of DSHEA legislation in 1994, which provides rigorous guidelines for the regulation of dietary supplements, the FDA has frequently attempted to usurp the public's freedom of access to dietary supplements. In addition, the FDA employs more than 14,000 employees, yet the FDA continues to utilize the discredited argument that allocation of more tax payer revenue is required to succeed.

3. *Dietary supplements were implied to have a terrible track record of safety*

Fact: In contrast to FDA-approved drug products, dietary supplements have a remarkable track record of safety. Adverse reactions to pharmaceutical drugs are the fifth leading cause of death, tied with stroke, causing 128,000 deaths per year.^{1,2} In contrast, a 2013 report by the National Poison Data System (NPDS) indicated no deaths attributed to dietary supplements.

4. *Fish oil supplements were directly suggested to be inferior to fish oil pharmaceutical drug products and without evidence of cardiovascular health benefits*

Fact: Life Extension's premier Super Omega-3 fish oil product, consistently 5-star certified for purity and potency by the leading, independent fish oil testing organization (IFOS), is formulated with the same form (ethyl esters) of omega-3 fatty acids as the FDA-approved, pharmaceutical drug product, but at a superior price savings. Furthermore, multiple, high-quality human trials support the cardiovascular benefits of dietary supplementation with purified fish oil.

5. *Dietary supplements are unnecessary for adequate nutrition – micronutrient intake is easily satisfied by food only*

Fact: The U.S. Department of Agriculture indicates the prevalence of inadequate nutrient intake is rampant –more than 90% for one nutrient and frequently greater than 50% for others.³

6. *Vitamin D in excess of the RDA is unnecessary and dangerous*

Fact: The government's RDA reflects a minimum threshold to guard against micronutrient deficiency, but it does not indicate optimal intake, nor optimal blood levels of vital nutrients in the body. Life Extension has long viewed the sheer epidemic of vitamin D insufficiency in the US population as a major health menace and has published extensively on the benefits of ensuring adequate vitamin D intake and the value of consistent, simple blood testing to determine vitamin D status for safety.

A **detailed rebuttal** of the entire *FRONTLINE* attack on the safety and efficacy of dietary supplements.

Further information on Life Extension's detailed, rigorous **quality control procedures**.

Life Extension's **detailed analysis** on a variety of the many flawed, misleading dietary supplement trials used to discredit the efficacy and health benefits of dietary supplements.

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*Ratings based on results of the 2026 ConsumerLab.com Survey of Supplement Users. Omega-3 EPA/DHA ratings based on results of the 2025 ConsumerLab.com Survey of Supplement Users. Multivitamin rating based on results of the 2024 ConsumerLab.com Survey of Supplement Users. For more information, visit www.consumerlab.com/survey.

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