



DIETARY SUPPLEMENT WEIGHT-LOSS PRODUCT MAY CAUSE LIVER DAMAGE: HEALTH WARNING

Here is a health warning that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is urging users of a dietary supplement product to take very seriously. The supplement is distributed as Hydroxycut products and the FDA has received enough reports of serious liver damage to issue the warning.

Hydroxycut products are dietary supplements that are marketed for weight loss by Iovate Health Sciences, Inc., of Oakville, Ontario (Canada), and distributed in the U.S. by Iovate Health Sciences USA, Inc., of Blasdell, New York. They are known as fat burners, as energy-enhancers, as low-carb diet aids and are also used for water loss.

To date, the FDA has received 23 reports of serious health problems, the majority of which have to do with liver damage. Reports include jaundice and elevated liver enzymes, which is an indicator of potential liver injury. The FDA has received a report of one death caused by liver failure to a person using the products. Persons with liver transplants are being warned not to take the product. Additional health problems reported from Hydroxycut use include cardiovascular disorders, nausea, excessive fatigue, muscle weakness and seizures.

“The FDA urges consumers to discontinue use of Hydroxycut products in order to avoid any undue risk,” said Linda Katz, M.D. of the FDA. “Adverse events are rare but exist. Consumers should consult a physician or other healthcare professional if they are experiencing symptoms possibly associated with these products.”

As a result of the warning, Iovate has issued a recall of 14 products in the U.S. Many of these products are taken in capsule form. Some are distributed as powder or to be taken as a shot. The company’s voluntary recall of product has also been issued for Canada. The products are being removed from retailer’s shelves. Persons who have purchased the products are being urged to stop taking them and to return them to their point of purchase.

There are two Hydroxycut products that are not being included in the recall. These are known as Hydroxycut Hoodia and Hydroxycut Cleanse. Additional products of Iovate are not included in the warning or the recall.

Source: The U.S. Food and Drug Administration. “FDA Warns Consumers to Stop Using Hydroxycut Products.” May 2009. <http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2009/NEW02006.html>. “Iovate Health Sciences USA, Inc. Voluntarily Recalls Hydroxycut-Branded Products.” May 2009.