

Ephedra Update: AAOM Issues Suggestions for Practitioners

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The American Association of Oriental Medicine (AAOM) has published the following statement for practitioners regarding the FDA's final ruling on ephedra:

What Practitioners Can Do: Protecting Our Access to Herbs

✖ Many practitioners have been contacting the AAOM to ask what they can do as individuals to help protect our access and use of herbs. The AAOM encourages practitioners to take the following actions which can lead to an actual, productive result:

As you are aware, a recent FDA regulation bans the use of ephedrine alkaloids in dietary supplements but specifically says in the preamble to the rule that this ban does not apply to ephedra preparations in traditional Asian medicine. Placing this assurance in the preamble has caused confusion among suppliers of Chinese medicine herbal formulas about the legality of their products which merits immediate clarification.

Here Is What You Can Do:

You are a licensed practitioner who votes in the legislator's district.

- Ask the legislator to contact the FDA and insist on an amendment to the ephedrine alkaloid regulation.
- Explain to the legislator that the exemption for traditional Asian medicine needs to be added in the text of the rule.
- Since the preamble to the rule does state that the ban on ephedrine alkaloids does not apply to Chinese medicine herbal formulas, by placing this statement into the actual rule will help clarify any confusion.

These products have a centuries-old history of benign and effective use by practitioners of Chinese medicine. This clarification is essential to assure the continued supply of these products to practitioners and their patients.

How to Make Contact With Your Senator or Representative

One of the best ways to make contact is by written letter, but certainly an e-mail version is fine. Some of you who have a relationship with your legislator may also want to speak with her/him personally. Nevertheless, having a written copy of your request is important. Keep your letter simple, and to the point.

We are providing you with a link to the United State House of Representatives and the United State Senate. Click on one of the links below and you will be directed to the main web site of either the Senate of House of Representatives. From the U.S. Senate web site, you will be able to select your state. From the U.S. house of Representatives web site, you will need to enter your zip code.

Senate

House of Representatives

Very Important: Send a copy of your letter or e-mail to AAOM headquarters. This way we can compile a file of hundreds of letters that will give us more leverage with the FDA.