

Beyond Prescription Intake of Dietary Supplements During Corona Pandemic: Legal Aspects

Md. Reduanul Haque

Joysree Das

BGC Trust University Bangladesh

Without recommendation of specific treatment for COVID-19 and the absence of an available vaccine to prevent this disease, the supportive treatment is considered to fight with COVID-19 at pandemic. It is now seen that, use of herbal remedies or phytomedicinal self-medication without prescription are familiar in developing countries for this reason the total health system of a country being in risk. This study intends to present the rational use of dietary supplements where regulatory authorities should play crucial role. Some notable reasons behind dietary supplements like zinc, vitamin C, vitamin D, calcium tablet, vitamin-e soft gelatin capsule, various types of antioxidant, honey and cod liver oil intake include prevention of disease, supplying nutritional needs, improving health condition, increasing energy. The products may also cause harm because of their rapid absorption in a short period of time, quality issues such as contamination, or by adverse interactions with other foods and medications. Food supplements containing vitamins and/or minerals as well as other ingredients should also be in conformity with the specific rules on vitamins and minerals laid down in CAC/GL 55 - 2005. With a view to protecting consumers from the effect of widespread application of very many kinds of supplements without prescription, the regulation procedure has been established to manufacture, import, processing, storage, distribution and sale of food so as to ensure access to safe food through exercise of appropriate scientific methods, and to coordinate the activities of all the organisations concerned with drug safety management. Presently, at least 15 special laws (excluding the common law provisions) govern the current legal framework of food and drug safety in Bangladesh. This multiplicity of laws is a great obstacle in this regard. Section 272 and 273 of the Penal Code, 1860 endorses food adulteration as an offence. The need of increased awareness with basic knowledge from the reliable source regarding the proper dose and side effects of dietary supplements should be improved with the help of regulatory bodies during this pandemic.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic, Dietary Supplements, Prescription, Regulation, Safety