Appetite Suppressant Encyclopedia Article

Appetite Suppressant

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Appetite Suppressant

An appetite suppressant is a substance that causes a person to consume less food. Appetite suppressants are also known as anorectics. Appetite suppressants can be substances that are purposely used or prescribed to decrease appetite. These include: phentermine (Adipex), sibutramine (Meridia) and some **antidepressants**. Appetite suppressants can also be herbal preparations, usually containing ephedra, which are claimed to aid in weight loss. Some medications have appetite suppression as a side effect. These include medicines given for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, such as Ritalin, Adderall, and Dexedrine; some chemotherapy drugs used to treat cancer; some drugs used to treat HIV/**AIDS**; and some medicines used for thyroid conditions. Some drugs of abuse also have appetite suppression as a side effect (such as cocaine and amphetamines or speed).

Some prescription weight-loss medications have been banned. The medications fenfluramine (Pondimin) and dexfenfluramine (Redux) were often given along with phentermine in a combination called Fen-Phen or Dex-Phen. Both fenfluramine and dexfenfluramine were found to cause serious heart problems. Phentermine alone is still used for weight loss for extremely overweight (morbidly obese) individuals.

Herbal supplements containing ephedra (sometimes called ma Huang) have also received much attention in the news. Many people do not realize that a substance can be herbal but still have potentially life-threatening side effects. Dangerous side effects from preparations that contain ephedra include feelings of nervousness and anxiety, racing heart, high blood pressure, sleep problems, **psychosis**, seizures, heart attack, stroke, and even death. The Food and Drug Administration has issued a warning about ephedra-containing preparations.

See Also

Amphetamine; Eating Disorders; Herbal Supplements; Nicotine.