

Walgreens' 'herbal supplements' don't contain herbs, testing shows

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Finest Nutrition' supplements contain contaminants, substitutes and fillers

Washington D.C. - The use of herbs and plants has been part of the healing arts for thousands of years, and they have many widely accepted medicinal uses. Herbal supplements are also a huge business in the United States, with \$6 billion in annual sales, according to the American Botanical Council.

But what if those supplements don't contain the beneficial herbs they claim? That's the question John Hollis – lead plaintiff in a class action lawsuit filed against Walgreens by Bailey Glasser LLP – must ask after learning that the Walgreens private label supplements he's been buying for years were tested and found to be made up of rice and other substitutes instead of the Ginkgo Biloba claimed on the label.

On February 3, 2015, the New York Attorney General served cease-and-desist letters to a number of retailers, including Walgreens, after an investigation found that only 21 percent of tested supplements actually contained DNA from the plants advertised on the bottles. Only 18 percent of Walgreens' "Finest Nutrition" private label supplements had DNA matching their product labels.

Customers bought herbal supplements that claimed to be Ginkgo Biloba, St. John's Wort, Garlic, Ginseng, Echinacea and other herbs. But instead, the supplements contained rice, allium, dracaena, wheat and other fillers or contaminants – none of which were listed in the ingredients. Some of the substituted fillers and contaminants are allergens posing considerable health risks that should have been disclosed to consumers.

These supplements are expensive, and consumers should have confidence that they are buying something beneficial, not worthless products that might actually contain allergens and other contaminants.

WALGREENS' 'HERBAL SUPPLEMENTS' DON'T CONTAIN HERBS, TESTING SHOWS

The class action lawsuit was filed by attorneys Greg Porter and Michael Murphy of Bailey Glasser's Washington, D.C., office.

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Practice Areas

Class Actions