NSF International Standard
for Dietary Supplements —

Dietary supplements

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5.3 Contaminants

5.3.1 Metals

5.3.1.1 Raw materials

Raw materials shall not contain undeclared metals in amounts greater than the following:

– arsenic content shall not exceed 5 parts per million (ppm);
– cadmium content shall not exceed 0.3 ppm;
– chromium (VI) content shall not exceed 2 ppm;
– lead content shall not exceed 10 ppm; and
– mercury content shall not exceed 0.2 ppm.

5.3.1.2 Finished products

Finished products shall not contain undeclared metals at rates of intake greater than the following:

– arsenic content shall not exceed 0.01 milligrams per daily dose (mg/d);
– cadmium content shall not exceed 0.006 mg/d;
– chromium (VI) content shall not exceed 0.02 mg/d;
– lead content shall not exceed 0.02 mg/d; and
– mercury content shall not exceed ~~0.02~~ 0.002 mg/d (2 μg/d).

REASON: The current levels in NSF/ANSI 173 were originally published in 2003, with an emphasis on international criteria including that found in the British Pharmacopoeia. The issue of heavy metals limits continued to cause much debate and discussion within the Joint Committee on Dietary Supplements, as well as by the DS Task Group formed to address it. The Task Group on Heavy Metals recommended correcting the current NSF/ANSI 173 mercury limit for finished products, since this value represents a mathematical error and should have been 0.002 mg.

At the October 13, 2011 JC Meeting, there was agreement that the finished product acceptance level for mercury should be reduced to 0.002 mg/day (2 ug/day).