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Beef Bile Supplement

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Beef bile supplements, also known as ox bile supplements or ox bile extracts, consist of several bile acids – cholic acid, desoxycholic acid, glycocholic acid and taurocholic acid – or the bile salts of these acids. They serve as dietary supplements, either for healthy individuals or for those coping with a deficiency in digestive function. Beef bile supplements can be beneficial under certain health conditions but is likely unnecessary if you are in good health. Consult a dietitian or your health care provider before adding these, or any, supplements to your daily nutrition plan.

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Background

Bile is a digestive fluid synthesized by your liver, stored in your gallbladder and secreted into your small intestine. It plays a critical role in helping you digest and absorb fat and in eliminating waste products. The fluid contains bile acids and bile salts, which are bile acids conjugated to sodium ions. Both bile acids and bile salts solubilize the dietary fats you consume so the cells of your small intestine can absorb them. Beef bile supplements, derived from oxen, can augment the bile naturally produced by your liver.

Benefits

Disorders of your liver, gallbladder or small intestine can impact the amount of naturally available bile needed to process dietary fat. In these cases, beef bile supplements can supply bile acids or bile salts to help you digest your food, according to Johns Hopkins Pathology. Liver disease, for example, can result in insufficient bile production that can be rectified by beef bile supplements. Gallbladder issues can affect the amount of bile available at any given time, and bile supplements can help ensure you have enough to cope with the meals you eat, particularly if your foods are rich in fat. Disorders of your small intestine can be treated with beef bile supplements as well, reports a 2006 issue of "Gastroenterology." For instance, if you develop steatorrhea, or fatty stools, as a result of this disease, beef bile supplements can reduce the amount of undigested fat passing through your gastrointestinal tract.

Drawbacks

As a healthy adult, your liver produces between 400 and 800 milliliters of bile each day, and most of the bile acids you manufacture are reabsorbed by your small intestine. The quantity of bile you synthesize coupled with the recycling of bile acids results in adequate bile to meet your dietary needs under normal conditions. The amount you consume in supplements is greatly outpaced by the amount your body manufactures, and, therefore, adding beef bile supplements to your diet when you are in good health offers no benefit and is an unnecessary expense. In addition, dietary supplements are subject to lax regulation by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration compared to conventional drugs. Taking unneeded supplements might potentially expose you to harmful contaminants or undisclosed ingredients.

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Considerations

Despite the risks inherent in any dietary supplement, the bile acids or bile salts in beef bile supplements are considered safe to consume, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Although they may be unnecessary if your digestive health is good, they pose no specific danger to your well-being.



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