

HCG Weight Loss Consumer Awareness Guide

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You are intrigued by the HCG diet and are considering giving it a try. You've probably seen or heard of the success stories – maybe a family member or friend or a neighbor – and now you're looking for a source of HCG. In this guide, we'll clarify legal and illegal products, what works and what doesn't, and answer your concerns about safety.

Do you really need this guide? Yes! Because of FDA regulations, things have changed a great deal since the HCG protocol exploded into the weight loss scene. New products are constantly coming into the market. Product claims run rampant. It's like the Wild West out there. If you're not aware and educated, you can be easily seduced by the first sales pitch you come across without actually knowing what you are buying.

The market moves quickly and information can get out of date, but this guide represents the latest state of the HCG diet product marketplace.

Please note that this guide is not intended to convince you to try the HCG diet. We are assuming you are already enthused about it, but would like some help deciding which options are the best. This guide will help you make an educated decision.

The most important industry change to understand is that so-called “homeopathic HCG” was made illegal by the FDA in December 2011. Homeopathic HCG can be recognized on ingredient lists as “HCG” or “Human Chorionic Gonadotropin” followed by numbers like 12X, 30X, etc. There's nothing illegal about homeopathic medicine in general, which measures ingredient strength using numbers as just mentioned. But HCG itself is not a valid ingredient; it is not listed in the HPUS (Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States), so it is not a True Homeopathic. We will explain more below.

However, you will still find online companies claiming to sell “real HCG” as homeopathic HCG drops, when they are actually selling an illegal product that will eventually land themselves (and maybe you, as a buyer) in hot water. Such products cannot be manufactured in an FDA-registered facility because the FDA wouldn't allow it. You also can't expect honest support and advice from a company that begins a relationship using deception.

You *can* find legal, over-the-counter (non prescription) options for the HCG protocol if that's what you are interested in, so don't despair. Keep reading and it'll all become clear. You'll quickly be an HCG product expert!

Options for the HCG Protocol

When looking at the HCG diet, you'll need to look at two primary components – the **HCG product** and the **diet plan**.

There are many **HCG products** that have been designed for use in Dr. Simeons' HCG protocol, with more variations arriving all the time. However, they all fall into one of the following categories:

1. Prescription HCG, such as injection
2. True Homeopathic (not “homeopathic HCG”)
3. Dietary supplements
4. Hybrids (combination of #2 and #3)

The only products created with FDA-registered ingredients are in categories #1 and #2. They contain active ingredients that can be legally included in drug products. For reasons we'll explain below, we recommend you try a product in category #2 (a True Homeopathic) first. Categories 2-4 can be referred to as HCG alternatives or hormone-free versions. We'll discuss each of these 4 categories in more detail below, and provide our top two recommendations below.

Every **diet plan** for the HCG protocol falls into two categories:

1. Dr. Simeons' original diet plan
2. Modified diet plan

The original diet plan follows a strict 500 calories a day and a particular food list, exactly as Dr. Simeons' outlined in his book *Pounds and Inches*. Anything else is considered modified, but both can work and have advantages. We'll discuss this more below.

What Really Works

Which product and diet category should you choose? What gives the best results?

The reality is that the whole HCG diet concept is highly controversial. If you are looking for *indisputable* clinical studies, you won't find it for any of the above products, even prescription HCG. Positive HCG studies have been done, just not enough to settle controversy. Consequently, the FDA requires prescription HCG to carry a disclaimer on the label. That's the FDA's ruling.

Yet as a consumer, you have the freedom to consider the thousands of people who have tried Dr. Simeons' HCG diet protocol with great success and are happy with their results. For many dieters, the HCG diet has been a lifesaver and has worked where nothing else has.

So is all that success due to the HCG product itself, or the restricted-calorie diet, or a combination of the two? A better question might be: if it works for you, if it is safe, and you feel great and healthier afterward, does it really matter how it happened? As a consumer, as long as you know the facts, you are free to make your own decisions. That's what this guide is all about.

What To Look For

Observing results and seeing people succeed is a great sign. But you do have to trust the company and what they say, so you also need to look for a source that you feel is honest and has expertise. You'll want a company that is responsive, that picks up the phone and replies to email. Finally, because nothing works 100% of the time, you want to **look for a strong guarantee and a no-hassle return policy**.

All those things take resources and time for a company to put in place and support. So, like most things, you get what you pay for. The lowest price you can find is probably not the best option.

Product Options Reviewed

Category #1: Prescription HCG

This is the original substance Dr. Simeons used in his protocol. The drug is registered with the FDA and the approved usage is for fertility treatment. For HCG diet purposes it is legal but considered “off-label” and thus requires a disclaimer. If you'd like to try the prescription HCG option for the HCG diet, we have a recommendation below.

All the **other categories** outside of prescription HCG can be considered “hormone-free” or alternatives to HCG, and fit within the well-established field of *alternative medicine*.

Why should you consider an alternative medicine solution?

- Because the right formula can work just as well as prescription HCG (using anecdotal evidence as mentioned above)
- Free of hormones and possible side effects from hormones
- You are not required to speak to a doctor or visit a clinic.
- Much less expensive than the prescription option.
- Travels well and has a long shelf life.
- Pharmacies and diet clinics don't have money-back guarantees; many alternative HCG product companies do (the better ones, anyway).

You'll see a wide range of products, claims and offers in these alternative categories. It can be very confusing. What product is best to use? Let's go through them.

Category #2: True Homeopathic Formula

“True” means that all active ingredients are registered with the FDA and produced in an FDA-registered facility so it is completely legal to manufacture. Every active ingredient used in the formulation is listed in the **HPUS (Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States)** because it has undergone a series of homeopathic provings. A homeopathic ingredient is followed by numbers like “6X” or “12X.” Homeopathy has been around for 200 years and is an established area of alternative medicine.

A true homeopathic formula is, in our opinion, the most legitimate alternative HCG product. Why? Because it can be designed to get at the root of the problems of weight gain and utilize the brain's self-regulating mechanisms instead of using pharmaceutical chemicals. It can be designed to fully match Dr. Simeons' “Signs and Symptoms” approach. The methodology of homeopathy and theory behind this thinking is beyond the scope of this document and not without critics, but you can read our specific recommendation below.

Products called “**homeopathic HCG**” are not true homeopathic formulas, because HCG is not included as an active ingredient in the HPUS. Prior to 2011, manufacturers produced homeopathic HCG outside of standard manufacturing procedures because it appeared to work well, and rules about the HPUS hadn't been enforced by the FDA. However, on December 6, 2011, the FDA released official statements that banned the manufacture of homeopathic HCG. Therefore, today, the product is considered a hybrid (category #4), and is not legal to produce.

The bottom line: if you see any non-prescription (over-the-counter) product for sale locally or online

labeled as “HCG” or with the ingredient “Human Chorionic Gonadotropin,” run the other way because it is illegal and *thus cannot be produced in an FDA-registered laboratory*. You have no idea how it was actually produced or what it contains. Furthermore, effectiveness is questionable because of the unofficial active ingredients without provings.

Category #3: Dietary Supplements

This includes things like fat burners, appetite suppressants, and other ingredients that can assist with weight loss, but they are clearly meant for *other purposes outside of HCG theory*. We do recommend certain supplements as a support in your diet, but not as a substitute for HCG. Again we suggest using a True Homeopathic instead.

Category #4: Hybrids (not legal)

These products are often labeled “homeopathic”, but in reality are not legal products. A true homeopathic formula can only contain ingredients listed in the HPUS – and cannot be mixed with other non-homeopathic ingredients or it is technically illegal to manufacture and sell. Common hybrids are “homeopathic HCG” as explained above, and products containing *amino acids* but labeled as homeopathic. Other hybrids use unproven manufacturing methods not recognized by the FDA or homeopathic standards.

Which Diet Plan?

You may be wondering whether to follow the original diet plan or a modified one. Dr. Simeons spent decades researching the diet portion of the protocol – a very good reason to stick to it. Most people follow the original protocol.

That said, the original diet falls into the VLCD (very low calorie diet) category and the food list is strict. The FDA and other institutions prefer that VLCD's are done under doctor supervision. For these reasons, modified plans have been created.

Although you may choose to start under the original protocol like most people, a modified plan might be just what you need to stick with the program. The drawback of course is that your weight loss could be less on a modified plan. Even so, we recommend that you choose a company that can provide instructions and guidance with both the original diet plan AND a modified program. You'll have some flexibility and choice that way.

Safety, Health and Side Effects

There are two factors to consider here: the product, and the diet.

First, the product. Which of the three legal product categories you choose is up to you. But by far, **if you are concerned about side effects of the product, you'll want to choose a product in category #2, a True Homeopathic**. A true homeopathic product has no known negative side effects. You can try it and see if it works for you, without risk. That's one reason we recommend trying a True Homeopathic option first.

Here are the safety and health considerations of *other* HCG diet products:

Prescription HCG was originally approved by the FDA for use in fertility treatment but can be used “off label” for HCG diet purposes. Side effects can happen as with any pharmaceutical, but keep in

mind side-effect studies of HCG are based on much higher doses. Fertility treatments doses are up to 80 times as great as the amount Dr. Simeons prescribed for use in the HCG protocol! And the FDA, as strict as they are, considers those doses safe. Plus, you can only get it from a doctor who can always advise you properly. That said, side effects with injectable HCG may occur, and you can read about them [here](#).

Dietary supplements (Category #3), like any other medicinal product can have side effects and interactions, but being herbal or naturally-derived, problems are generally minimal. It's impossible to summarize possible side effects because it depends entirely on the ingredients, of which there are hundreds of possibilities.

Next, the diet. Although most people have no trouble with Dr. Simeons' dietary plan, a drastic change in what you eat and how much you eat can cause some discomfort and physical adaptations or reactions such as a headache, rash (release of toxins) or constipation. Such problems are typically mild. As well, critics of the HCG diet frequently mention the risks of a VLCD (very low calorie diet). But this mainly stems from ignorance or misinformation. There are some health risks from VLCDs, but they are not as great as most people believe. We've researched the topic of VLCDs extensively and have a separate report available on the subject. VLCDs are prescribed (and personally used) by doctors, especially for people with certain conditions such as type 2 diabetes, severe obstructive sleep apnea, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, and—of course—extreme obesity (BMI > 30). Obesity is very widespread and increases your risk for all the previously mentioned health problems. Losing weight as fast as you can could be the best thing you've ever done for your health. That said, as usual it's best to discuss big diet changes with your doctor.

To help keep your diet healthy, be sure to eat all your protein servings, and take a multivitamin properly balanced with electrolytes. *Vita-X* (available at HealthyHCG.com) is the only multivitamin we know of designed for rapid weight loss programs like the HCG diet.

DIY or Doctor Supervised? The vast majority of HCG dieters and people on weight loss programs are “do-it-yourselfers.” Huge numbers of people around the world and in the United States have done the HCG diet on their own. That said, it is always best to check with your doctor before you begin a weight loss program – especially if you have known health issues like diabetes or problems with your heart, liver or kidneys. You may also consider a combination approach: make an appointment with your doctor before you start, explain what you are doing, get the “all clear” for a restricted diet, and then check in regularly or if anything seems wrong during the program. Just realize that as smart and authoritative as doctors are, not all of them are fully aware of alternative medicine options.

Conclusion: Our Top Two Best Recommendations

1. Use a True Homeopathic formula, for the following reasons:

- It is legal. The active ingredients in a True Homeopathic are registered with the FDA via the HPUS (Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States), unlike “homeopathic HCG”.
- Active ingredients have homeopathic provings for effectiveness.
- Success stories demonstrate weight loss is the same as prescription HCG.
- Free of hormones and possible side effects from hormones.
- You are not required to speak to a doctor or visit a clinic.
- Much less expensive than the prescription option.
- Travels well and has a long shelf life.

- Money-back guarantees are available from reputable companies (unlike pharmacies or clinics).

Specifically, we recommend *Nano Diet Drops* from HealthyHCG:

- It's the only HCG alternative designed specifically to follow Dr. Simeons "Signs and Symptoms" approach to weight loss on the HCG diet.
- You'll get expertise and honest advice. HealthyHCG has been in business since 2009 and was the first company to create a True Homeopathic option for the HCG diet.
- Hundreds of documented testimonials and happy customers.
- You can choose either Dr. Simeons original diet (Classic), or a modified (Flex) diet plan.
- Boost your results with optional supplements designed to compliment the HCG protocol.
- You'll be backed by a Triple Guarantee so there is no risk in trying the product.

[Click Here to Read the Full Story of the “Nano” Discovery](#)

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2. On the other hand, if you want to try prescription HCG, we have partnered with a great company that can take care of the process entirely online and by phone. Normally you'd have to visit a clinic in your area. With this company, you fill out a form online to enroll in the program, followed by a short 2 to- 3 minute doctor consultation by phone. A pharmacy then mails HCG to you (available in drops, pellets or injections). It's the simplest way to buy prescription HCG. This company has a stellar reputation and has been doing business since 2004.

[Click Here for the Best Source of Prescription HCG](#)



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