

# How to check out (the regulatory compliance of) a company selling dietary supplements in Canada

For a few of the reasons why I recommend checking out the regulatory compliance of companies who sell dietary supplements in Canada, [here is the blog post](#).

There are two main “approvals” to have a NHP product licensed in Canada. First the company needs a “**site licence**” to be approved to manufacture and/or import the products. Second, each product needs to be individually licensed and granted an **NPN** or **DIN-HM** number to be (legally) marketed and sold to the Canadian public.

## Step 1 – Look for the Site Licence:

Go to [NNHPDs "List of site licence holders" page](#).

...“The **site licence holder** extracts indicate sites that have been authorized to manufacture, package, label and/or import natural health products by Health Canada.”...



The screenshot displays the Health Canada website interface. At the top, there are logos for Health Canada and Santé Canada, along with the Canadian flag and the word 'Canada'. The main header features the Health Canada logo and the URL www.hc-sc.gc.ca. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for Français, Home, Contact Us, Help, Search, and Canada.ca. The main content area is titled 'List of site licence holders' and contains a message from the Natural Health Products Directorate (NHPD) regarding its name change to the Natural and Non-prescription Health Products Directorate (NNHPD). The message states: 'The Natural Health Products Directorate (NHPD) has changed its name to the Natural and Non-prescription Health Products Directorate (NNHPD) subsequent to its recently expanded mandate to include the oversight of non-prescription and disinfectant drugs in addition to natural health products (NHPs). Please note that we are currently modifying documents to reflect this change. Thank you for your patience and understanding.' Below this message, there is a note about the language of the information provided, followed by a section titled 'What are the site licence holder and foreign site reference number data extracts?' which explains that the data consists of two compressed ASCII text files.

- Scroll down and open the pdf extract of the “Site licence holder information”

Help on accessing alternative formats, such as Portable Document Format (PDF), Microsoft Word and PowerPoint (PPT) files, can be obtained in the [alternate format help section](#).

Site Licence holder information is made available in extract format. For site licences, the information consists of the site, its address, the site licence number, and the activity types. For foreign site reference numbers, the information consists of the company name, its address, the activity types, and the reference number.



**What are the site licence holder and foreign site reference number data extracts?**

The site licence holder data extracts consist of two compressed ASCII text files, one for site licence holder information and the other for foreign site reference number information. The ASCII files, to be useful, must be loaded into an existing database or information system. Users of the ASCII files must be familiar with database structure and be capable of setting up their own queries.



The site licence holder and foreign site reference number extracts are updated on a periodic basis. The site licence holder extracts indicate sites that have been authorized to manufacture, package, label and/or import natural health products by Health Canada. The foreign site reference number extracts indicate sites outside of Canada which have been assessed against Part 3 of the Natural Health Products Regulations for good manufacturing practices (GMPs) and issued a reference number. Please note that a reference number is for reference only and that these sites have not been licensed by Health Canada.

**Data extracts - last updated: October 30, 2015**

**Site licence holder information**

-  (PDF Version - 269 KB)
-  (XLS Version - 1.05 MB)

**Foreign site reference number information**

-  (PDF Version - 74 KB)
-  (XLS Version - 157 KB)

**Electronic copy of reports**

To obtain a full electronic copy of the site licence holder information report or the foreign site reference number information report in PDF format, please contact the [Natural Health Products Directorate](#) indicating which report(s) you would like to receive.

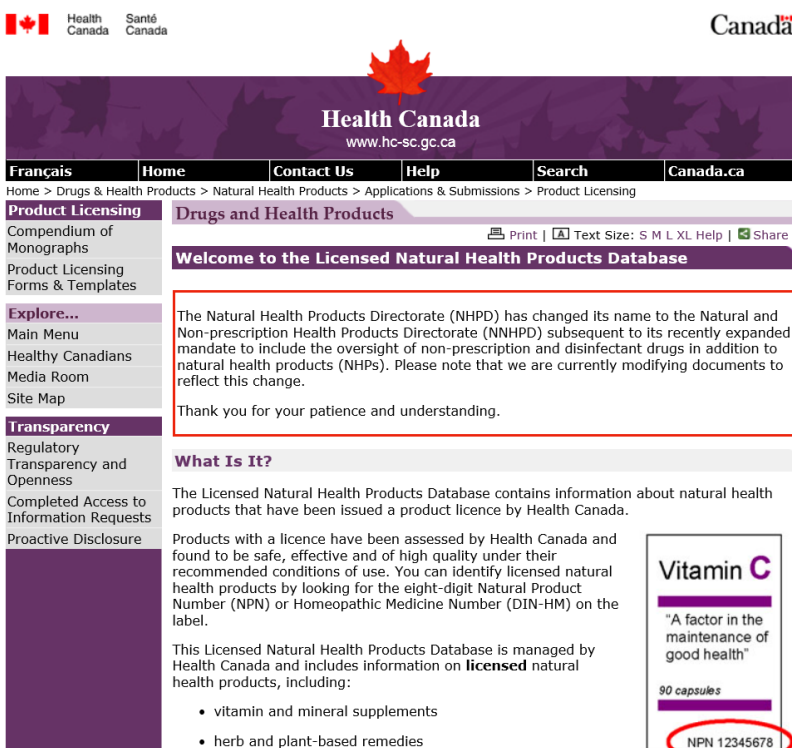
**Copyright**

- As of 2015Oct31 the pdf is 24 pages long and all site licence holders are listed alphabetically
- As you can see the pdf is copyrighted, so I can't show you it here (and it is updated regularly, so you are going to want to see the most up-to-date version for yourself anyway)
- Have a quick look to make sure that the company is on that list.
- Easy, peasy

## Step 2 – Look up Product Licenses:

Go to Health Canada's [Licensed Natural Health Product Database \(LNHPD\)](#)

- The objective here is to look up the company, and the supplements that they have licensed in Canada



The screenshot shows the Health Canada website interface. At the top, there are logos for Health Canada and Canada. The main header features the Health Canada logo and the URL www.hc-sc.gc.ca. Below this is a navigation menu with links for Français, Home, Contact Us, Help, Search, and Canada.ca. The breadcrumb trail indicates the current location: Home > Drugs & Health Products > Natural Health Products > Applications & Submissions > Product Licensing.

The main content area is titled "Welcome to the Licensed Natural Health Products Database". A red box highlights a notice: "The Natural Health Products Directorate (NHPD) has changed its name to the Natural and Non-prescription Health Products Directorate (NNHPD) subsequent to its recently expanded mandate to include the oversight of non-prescription and disinfectant drugs in addition to natural health products (NHPs). Please note that we are currently modifying documents to reflect this change. Thank you for your patience and understanding."

Below the notice is a section titled "What Is It?" which states: "The Licensed Natural Health Products Database contains information about natural health products that have been issued a product licence by Health Canada. Products with a licence have been assessed by Health Canada and found to be safe, effective and of high quality under their recommended conditions of use. You can identify licensed natural health products by looking for the eight-digit Natural Product Number (NPN) or Homeopathic Medicine Number (DIN-HM) on the label. This Licensed Natural Health Products Database is managed by Health Canada and includes information on **licensed** natural health products, including:

- vitamin and mineral supplements
- herb and plant-based remedies

To the right of the text is a product listing for "Vitamin C" with a red circle around the NPN number "NPN 12345678". The listing includes the text: "A factor in the maintenance of good health" and "90 capsules".

- Scroll down to the “Access the LNHPD” box & click it

• probiotics

• homeopathic medicines

• many everyday consumer products, like certain toothpastes, antiperspirants, shampoos, facial products and mouthwashes

**What Information Can I Find Here?**

For every licensed product listed in this database, the following details are provided:

- product name
- product licence holder
- Natural Product Number (NPN) or Homeopathic Medicine Number (DIN-HM)
- product's medicinal ingredients
- product's non-medicinal ingredients
- product's dosage form
- product's recommended use or purpose (i.e. its health claim or indication)
- risk information associated with the product's use (i.e. cautions, warnings, contra-indications and known adverse reactions)

Some of the hyperlinks provided are to sites of organizations or other entities that are not subject to the [Official Languages Act](#). The material found there is therefore in the language(s) used by the sites in question.

Additional information about this database:

- the data is updated nightly
- use the [User Guide](#) for help navigating the database
- use the [Terminology Guide](#) to understand the words and terms used in the database

[Access the Licensed Natural Health Products Database](#)

[Access the Licensed Natural Health Products Database Data Extract](#)

**For More Information**

- For **technical support** or for general questions about the content of this database,

- **Hot Tip** - There is a “**User Guide**” in the top left corner of the page that is very helpful for navigating the searches in this database
- On this page you can search by whichever criteria you are interested in, but we will focus on the “**Licence Holder**”
  - If you want to know all of the licensed NHPs marketed that company (which may be under multiple brand names), click the “Licence Holder”. This is the company who holds the licences and is responsible for those products on the Canadian market – the ones you just found in the “Site licence holder” list

- Type the company's name in the “Criterion” and hit the purple “Search” button at the bottom of the page
- You will then have a list of every NHP licensed for sale in Canada by that company.
- If you want to see the approved information for each product (use, dose, risk information, etc.) then click on each product and have a look. Feel free to compare the approved information with the information on the product label, the company's website and promotional materials, etc.
- **Hot Tip** – Just because a company has a product licence does not mean that they are currently actively selling the product. There may be many reasons why you may not be able to purchase the product right now. If you want to confirm, just contact the company to inquire.

**Hope this helps you to check out the regulatory compliance of any company who markets supplements to Canadians!**

Hi! I'm the Leesa behind [NutritionInteractions](#) and the Facebook page – Science for Holistic Health.

I like to say that “**I live at the intersection of science and holistic health**” (and it's really, really interesting here!). :)



I have a “**science-based, holistic approach**” to nutrition and health.

If you are a holistic health professional and want a **free, no-strings-attached 30 minute Skype chat where I will give you strategies and resources that can help you with your science-based health information right away**, then [please complete my survey here](#). It'll only take about 10 minutes, and it'll give us a great basis to have a laser-focused chat.

Or, perhaps you want **custom health research support and/or writing**? Maybe a personal health research assistant, or someone to fact-check or “ghost write” articles and documents for you? Someone who is uniquely well-versed in both science AND holistic health? If so, [I can help you here](#).

If you want to know more about my health philosophy, and why I don't really fit in, [click here](#).

Did this resource help you? Do you know other people who could benefit from it? If you'd like to spread the word (and I'd SO appreciate that!), click below to share with your friends and followers:



If there is something else you're looking for in terms of science or holistic health, or just want to say “hi”, feel free to email me at [leesa@nutritioninteractions.com](mailto:leesa@nutritioninteractions.com)

Thanks so much!