



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

## Lohud: NY bans sale of diet pills, weight-loss supplements to kids.

### Why law was passed

DAVID ROBINSON October 26, 2023

New York has banned the sale of over-the-counter diet pills and supplements for weight loss and muscle building to children under a new state law.

Gov. Kathy Hochul approved [the new law](#) Thursday, making New York one of the first states in the country to prohibit the booming weight-loss industry from targeting minors under age 18, according to a statement by state Sen. Shelley Mayer, D-Yonkers.

The law requires companies, including online retailers, to use age-verification methods and tools to prevent diet pill and supplement sales to kids. It covers all non-prescription pills or supplements that are marketed or labeled for the purpose of weight loss.



Violations of the law could result, in part, a court injunction halting a companies' sales until it incorporates age-verification, as well as fines of up to \$500 per violation, state records show. Colorado banned diet pill sales to kids in May, according to [local media reports](#), and California is pursuing a similar law banning diet pill and weight-loss supplement sales to kids.

## **What's the danger of diet pills, supplements for young people?**



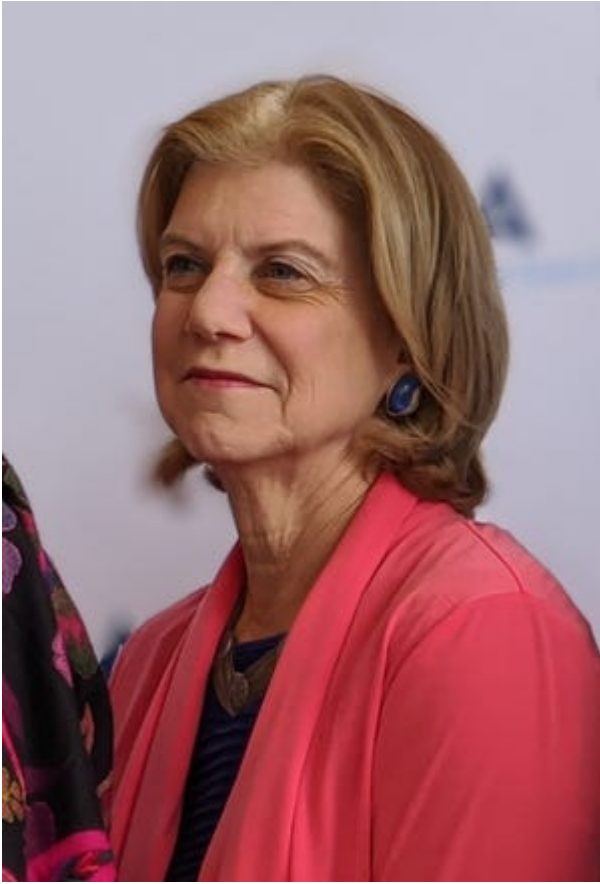
More than 1.7 million, or 9% of New Yorkers, will suffer from an eating disorder throughout their lifetime, state lawmakers noted.

Eating disorders cause immense harm to young people, their families and communities, costing the state more than \$3.9 billion a year in direct medical care costs and lost productivity, lawmakers added, noting more than 10,000 people lose their lives each year nationally as a direct result of an eating disorder.

There have also been examples of companies using fake celebrity endorsements, including by Oprah Winfrey, to promote and sell weight-loss pills and supplements, [USA TODAY reported](#).

**Fact check:** [Ads claiming to sell Oprah Winfrey weight-loss gummies are scams](#)

## What NY lawmakers say about diet pills, supplements for kids



State lawmakers asserted dietary supplements are "dangerously under-regulated," citing studies that revealed some products are laced with **unapproved pharmaceutical ingredients**, illicit anabolic steroids, experimental and banned stimulants, and other dangerous chemicals.

Mayer noted she championed the law after being disheartened by "generations of young adults struggling to meet unrealistic societal expectations, leading them to trying short term, dangerous solutions."

## What about prescription anti-obesity medications?

The new state law only applies to weight-loss pills and supplements sold over-the-counter.

It comes as demand for more tightly regulated prescription anti-obesity medications has grown exponentially this year as several new drugs come on the market.

But those drugs cost \$1,000 a month or more per person — and they need to be taken indefinitely, raising questions about affordability and insurance coverage. More than 40% of Americans weight enough to qualify for the anti-obesity medications, [USA TODAY reported](#).

Once someone starts taking one of these new anti-obesity medications, like those that treat high blood pressure and cholesterol, they will need to continue taking them or risk the pounds creeping back.

Meanwhile, the American Academy of Pediatrics this year changed its guidelines for children with obesity and recommended more aggressive treatments, including [medications for children as young as 12](#). Guidelines released late last year from American Diabetes Association also [recommend aggressively treating obesity](#), including using medications, in patients with diabetes.

*Karen Weintraub of USA TODAY contributed to this report.*

Read the article here: <https://www.lohud.com/story/news/ny-news/2023/10/26/why-ny-banned-sale-of-diet-pills-supplements-to-children-law/71328115007/>