

# Concerns over bovine capsules

I WRITE to warn Malaysians who are vegetarians and those who are Muslims to be very cautious when buying health supplements that are gel based.

I was recommended a branded supplement to treat knee-joint pains i.e. glucosamine in combination with chondroitin. I noted that the gelatin used to encapsulate the supplement was bovine sourced.

Bovine is strictly a no-no for vegetarians especially Hindus and can be treated as "was-was" for Muslims as the source from which the bovine is derived may not be *halal*.

Upon reading that the gelatin used in the capsule was bovine, I then sent an email to the company asking if it had the same product contained in vegetable gelatin, and it replied no.

What shocked me more was being informed as follows by the company:

"The capsules are bovine sourced. You may not have been aware, but the chondroitin is also bovine sourced, so this supplement would be unsuitable for you."

I am sure many who have been consuming such products may not have known that chondroitin is

possibly also bovine sourced.

Glucosamine in combination with chondroitin has been highly recommended by medical professionals for treatment of knee-joint pains.

In view of this it will be good if the Health Ministry insists that labels for such products be very clear, that it is not suitable for vegetarians, and also for Muslims to refrain from buying and consuming if the bovine source is not derived the *halal* way.

**R.I. UMA,**  
**George Town.**