

The FTC recently <u>sent</u> another round of <u>warning letters</u> to ten sellers related to advertising claims that their products treat or prevent COVID-19.

Consistent with <u>prior warning letters</u> jointly issued by the FDA and FTC, the FTC's letters allege that the sellers are falsely claiming that the products are proven to prevent or treat coronavirus when, in fact, there is no competent and reliable scientific evidence that is currently known to exist for products that prevent or treat COVID-19. The products named in the warning letters include:

- A product with "healing [sound] frequencies" that can destroy the virus (Bioenergy Wellness Miami)
- Silicon facial brushes that can "protect you[] from the coronavirus" (Face Vital LLC)

- Air-purifiers "scientifically proven to efficiently prevent spread of air-borne viruses" (LightAir International AB)
- Intravenous drip "therapies" or treatments that help prevent or treat COVID-19 (<u>MedQuick Labs, LLC</u>, Resurgence Medical Spa, LLC, and Rocky Mountain IV Medics)
- An "ANTI-VIRUS KIT" of immune defense supplements (<u>New Performance Nutrition</u>)
- Vitamin C supplements (<u>PuraTHRIVE LLC</u>) and products with active ingredient immune benefits that can help prevent or treat COVID-19 (<u>Suki Distribution Pte. Ltd.</u> and <u>Vita Activate</u>)

The letters require the sellers to immediately cease making claims that the products can treat or cure COVID-19 and to respond within 48 hours explaining the actions the sellers have taken to address the FTC's concerns. Further, the FTC press release noted that a failure to comply may result in an action for an injunction or refund of money to consumers. These letters, along with <u>other letters jointly issued with the FDA</u>, signal the importance and urgency with which regulators are viewing these pandemic-related marketing practices. **Key Takeaways:**

- The FTC and FDA are actively monitoring COVID-19-related advertising.
- Marketers should ensure that they have competent and reliable scientific evidence to support any COVID-19-related advertising and labeling claims about their products before such claims are made. Practically speaking, marshalling such evidence is very difficult at this time as much remains unknown about the virus responsible for COVID-19 and effective treatments for the disease.
- While the latest warning letters do not address the Federal Food, Drug, & Cosmetic Act considerations, advertising that a product can prevent, mitigate, cure, or treat COVID-19 may result in the product being qualified as an unapproved new drug sold in violation of the FDCA.

Authors



Jason S. Howell

Partner JHowell@perkinscoie.com 206.359.3134

Explore more in

Consumer Protection Blog series

Consumer Protection Review

Consumer Protection Review helps businesses that market and sell to consumers navigate federal and state legal issues related to advertising, privacy, promotions, products liability, government investigations, unfair competition, class actions and general consumer protection.

View the blog