

Misleading Fitness and Health Commercials

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Some people do not know all that much about exercise and dieting. They do not know healthy ways to eat, and they don't realize that one can't get the "Perfect Body" in just a few days. These people are possibly victims of Fitness Myths. "In 2002, the Federal Trade Commission released a report that shared a review of 300 weight-loss ads promoting 218 different products. They found the rampant use of false or misleading claims" (FTC, 2003) Misleading fitness products can be particularly damaging. If one is misled into purchasing a product and the product doesn't work as it was advertised, not only have you wasted your money, but also the product may have physically [hurt](#) your body. FTC [chairman](#) Timothy Muris talks about the advertising and promotion tactics of the fitness industry "ads that make claims and promises that are clearly implausible and patently false run in all forms of media, with the notable exception of network TV" (FTC, 2003). Misleading advertisements are common among all forms of media. Although TV commercials may be more powerful in their persuasion, an obvious reason for this is that TV advertisements show more misleading commercials. A technique frequently used in commercials to make them seem credible is that "many deceptive ads run in highly respected publications and they are perceived to be credible"(FTC, 2003). Therefore if the TV program you are watching, while the commercial is being played, seems credible, consumers tend to believe that the products advertised during the episode are also trustworthy.

One such misleading advertisement was for a product called [Skinny](#) Pill for Kids. This diet pill was targeting kids ranging from age 6 to 12. The pill was supposed to help kids lose weight and provide essential daily vitamins, minerals and herbs. “The marketer of the supplement said her company had not done safety tests on children” (CNN, 2002). It turned out that the product being advertised as a “miracle” to help children loose weight contained herbs that are diuretics. “Uva ursi, juniper berry, and buchu leaf all cause the body to lose water. A doctors’ guide to drugs and alternative remedies, states the uva ursi should not be given to children under age 12” (CNN, 2002).

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