



Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Health  
**FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION**



12 December 2013

**FDA ADVISORY**

No. 2013 063

**SUBJECT: PUBLIC WARNING AGAINST HEALTH SCAMS IN  
THE INTERNET**

Health scams are very common in these times of high-tech global changes in the marketplace. Scammers promise unsuspecting consumers of miracle/cure-all health supplements and other medical cures that are offering unbelievable results. Be wary of these advertisements and marketing schemes of unscrupulous individuals whose main concern is profit.

To avoid being victimized by scammers, consumers are hereby advised of the following:

1. Cure all health supplements that promised quick and easy remedies for serious health conditions - The truth: Health/dietary supplements are merely food products intended to be taken only to support the nutritional needs of the body and not meant to have any therapeutic effect nor to replace prescribed medications. These products are usually not approved by the FDA, ineffective, and in some cases they may actually affect your health.
2. Health/dietary supplements are usually promoted by people who have no medical qualifications but exploit hopes for improved health.
3. Be wary of internet advertisements for rapid weight loss or whitening/beauty treatments. If such advertisements are too good to be true – suspect that it is a scam. Usually these products may cause you harm instead of the desired results. Always remember that there is no substitute for proper diet and regular exercise and no such thing as sole item of a meal or diet or replacement of drugs and medicines.
4. When buying medicines on-line, make sure that the seller has valid FDA License to Operate (LTO). It is against FDA laws to sell medicines (over-the-counter or prescription) without LTO and without a licensed pharmacist. Only drugstores, pharmacy, hospital pharmacy and other retail outlets as authorized by the FDA may sell drugs directly to the consumers.
5. Make sure that a licensed pharmacist is available to provide the patient with advice on prescription drugs. Sellers of prescription drugs whether or not online are required to fill orders only upon prescription. If you are sold a drug without a

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prescription, most likely, that the drug sold to you would be inappropriate, or even dangerous to your health because of a condition that you might not realize you have. It could even interact with some drugs you are taking. Always consult your doctor before taking any prescription drugs.

6. Beware of online pharmacies that do not indicate a physical address or toll-free phone number to contact in case of a problem or adverse drug reaction. These on-line pharmacies are hard to track down for purposes of traceability or may be illegitimate on-line pharmacies. Buying medicines from illegitimate sources may expose you to counterfeit drugs. Counterfeit drugs are ineffective, harmful and dangerous to your health.
7. If you suspect that you have bought a counterfeit drug or you are experiencing any adverse reaction after taking the drug bought online, report it. Kindly email the FDA at [report@fda.gov.ph](mailto:report@fda.gov.ph).
8. Before buying any health product online or to check if an online pharmacy has a valid license, please verify by logging in at FDA website ([www.fda.gov.ph](http://www.fda.gov.ph)) and type in the name of the health product/online pharmacy in the search bar. For more information or clarification, please email us via [info@fda.gov.ph](mailto:info@fda.gov.ph).
9. Be a well-informed consumer. Know your RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES as a consumer.

  
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