

Officials warn consumers about miracle reducing products

By Denice Smee

"Become beautiful overnight with this miracle cream."

"Lose five pounds this week."

"Take off those unsightly layers around your middle."

Everyone has heard these types of ads, but the Federal Food and Drug Administration says consumers should take care when buying such items.

"Often such devices or treatments are nothing more than money-making schemes for their promoters. The results they produce are questionable, and some are hazardous to health," Margaret Morrison wrote in a June 1975 issue of FDA Consumer.

The FDA requires proof of safety and effectiveness of drugs before they can be sold, the report said, but it has no control over devices until after the device has been marketed.

Dangerous to health

Then if the device proves to be dangerous to health when used as directed, or if the directions are inadequate, the FDA can force the product off the market

through legal proceedings.

Other federal agencies which can initiate legal action against a product at the U.S. Postal Service if the device or drug was mailed and the Federal Trade Commission if it has been misrepresented by false or misleading advertising.

consumer byline

However, if the product meets the standards of these agencies, it still can be sold whether it is truly effective or not.

The Better Business Bureau in *Tips for Consumers from Your Better Business Bureau* warns consumers about products that "miraculously stops your appetite and hunger."

Lose money

"You reach for your money and head for the mailbox," it says, "Before you run out the door, the Better Business Bureau warns that the only thing you stand to lose is your money."

A pharmacist at Wagey Drug Co.,

Washington and 17th Streets, said there is a great demand for weight-reducing products, but they only offer one kind.

"I think the best idea is to follow a strict diet and not to take any medication," she said.

These types of drugs may be effective the first week especially if they are designed to reduce water weight but after that it is probably all psychological, she said.

Walgreen Self Service Drug, 1301 O Sts. carries several kinds of drugs that promise weight reduction, pharmacist Herbert Naber said.

One of the most effective ones, he said, produces bulk in the stomach, so the person is not as hungry.

"Those that are chemical stimulators aren't usually as effective," he said.

Follow directions

Larry Redfield, a pharmacist at K-Ray Pharmacy, 2541 N. 11, said that persons who use the weight reducing aids sold there have to follow the directions if they expect results.

"You definitely have to follow the diet plan in the package or it won't work," he

said.

Anyone on a diet probably should be taking a vitamin supplement, he said.

Redfield said the protein drinks which have been so controversial were considered dangerous because the only thing the person consumed was the drink.

He said the ones sold now at K-Ray Pharmacy direct the person to drink it for only two meals and then eat a regular third meal.

Well balanced meal

These will not be dangerous as long as the meal eaten is a well-balanced one, Redfield said.

An FDA Consumer Memo of March 1974 suggested that if consumers think they have been victims of a dangerous or misrepresented drug or device they should do one of the following:

See their physician or inform their county medical society.

Contact the FDA either at a local district office or at their headquarters, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Md. 20852.

Contact the Better Business Bureau. Inform the local Post Office if the drug or device was mailed.

Anti-union brief filed

An NU Board of Regents brief sent to the Nebraska Supreme Court opposes a faculty union at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, according to an attorney for the opposition.

David Cullan, lawyer representing the UNO chapter of the American Association of University Professors, said the brief only rehashes a 1977 appeal that lost. He said he does not "expect any difference in opinion from the Supreme Court in 1978 than in 1977."

The regents filed the brief Wednesday, appealing a Nebraska Court of Industrial Relations decision saying the union was an appropriate bargaining unit.

The regents charge that the union would infringe on their right to establish uniform personnel policies and wages.

It also said department chairmen, librarians, special appointees, assistant instructors and counselors have conflicting interests and should not be included in a single bargaining unit.

Cullan said the court upheld a similar case last year on the UNL campus, but the union proposal was later voted down by the UNL Faculty Senate.

"How this case can be distinguished from the Lincoln case is beyond me," he said.

The entire Lincoln case brief entered as evidence in the industrial relations decision.

Cullan said the regents could be stalling for time. The opposition brief will be filed within the next month and a half, he added. A court date will then be set.

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