

FDA NEWS RELEASE

Coronavirus Update: FDA and FTC Warn Seven Companies Selling Fraudulent Products that Claim to Treat or Prevent COVID-19

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The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued warning letters to seven companies for selling fraudulent COVID-19 products. These products are unapproved drugs that pose significant risks to patient health and violate federal law. The FDA and FTC are taking this action as part of their response in protecting Americans during the global COVID-19 outbreak. The warning letters are the first to be issued by the FDA for unapproved products intended to prevent or treat “Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019” (COVID-19).

“The FDA considers the sale and promotion of fraudulent COVID-19 products to be a threat to the public health. We have an aggressive surveillance program that routinely monitors online sources for health fraud products, especially during a significant public health issue such as this one,” said FDA Commissioner Stephen M. Hahn, M.D. **“We understand consumers are concerned about the spread of COVID-19 and urge them to talk to their health care providers, as well as follow advice from other federal agencies about how to prevent the spread of this illness. We will continue to aggressively pursue those that place the public health at risk and hold bad actors accountable.”**

“There already is a high level of anxiety over the potential spread of coronavirus,” said FTC Chairman Joe Simons. **“What we don’t need in this situation are companies preying on consumers by promoting products with fraudulent prevention and treatment claims. These warning letters are just the first step. We’re prepared to take enforcement actions against companies that continue to market this type of scam.”**

The FDA is particularly concerned that products that claim to cure, treat or prevent serious diseases like COVID-19 may cause consumers to delay or stop appropriate medical treatment, leading to serious and life-threatening harm.

The FDA and FTC jointly issued warning letters to [Vital Silver](#), [Quinessence Aromatherapy Ltd.](#), [Xephyr, LLC doing business as N-Ergetics](#), [GuruNanda, LLC](#), [Vivify Holistic Clinic](#), [Herbal Amy LLC](#), and [The Jim Bakker Show](#). The products cited in these warning letters are teas, essential oils, tinctures and colloidal silver. The FDA has [previously warned](#) that colloidal silver is not safe or effective for treating any disease or condition. The FDA and FTC requested companies respond in 48 hours describing the specific steps they have taken to correct the violations. Companies that sell products that fraudulently claim to prevent, treat or cure COVID-19 may be subject to legal action, including but not limited to seizure or injunction.

There are currently no vaccines or drugs approved to treat or prevent COVID-19. Although there are investigational COVID-19 vaccines and treatments under development, these investigational products are in the early stages of product development and have not yet been fully tested for safety or effectiveness.

In addition to following up with companies that fail to make adequate corrections, the FDA and FTC will continue to monitor social media, online marketplaces and incoming complaints to help ensure that the companies do not continue to sell fraudulent products under a different company name or on another website. An FDA cross-agency task force has been established and dedicated to closely monitor for fraudulent products related to COVID-19. The task force has already reached out to major retailers to ask for their help in monitoring their online marketplaces for fraudulent products claiming to combat coronavirus and other pathogens. The task force has already worked with major retailers and online marketplaces to remove more than three dozen listings of fraudulent COVID-19 products. Several have already agreed to monitor their marketplaces for COVID-19 claims.

The FDA reminds consumers to be cautious of websites and stores selling products that claim to prevent, mitigate, treat, diagnose or cure COVID-19. Fraudulent COVID-19 products may come in many varieties, including dietary supplements and other foods, as well as products purporting to be drugs, medical devices or vaccines. Products that claim to cure, mitigate, treat, diagnose or prevent disease, but are not proven safe and effective for those purposes, defraud consumers of money and can place consumers at risk for serious harm. Using these products may lead to delays in getting proper diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19 and other potentially serious diseases and conditions.

The FDA encourages health care professionals and consumers to report adverse events or quality problems experienced with the use of COVID-19 products to the [FDA's MedWatch Adverse Event Reporting program](#).

The FDA, an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, protects the public health by assuring the safety, effectiveness, and security of human and veterinary drugs, vaccines and other biological products for human use, and medical devices. The agency also is responsible for the safety and security of our nation's food supply, cosmetics, dietary supplements, products that give off electronic radiation, and for regulating tobacco products.

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