

COMPLAINT NUMBER	16/383
COMPLAINANT	K Hester
ADVERTISER	Natural Sense
ADVERTISEMENT	Natural Sense Digital Marketing
DATE OF MEETING	5 May 2017
OUTCOME	Settled

Advertisement: The Natural Sense website, <http://naturalsense.co.nz/colloidalsilver>, promotes Colloidal Silver for the treatment of a wide range of conditions.

The Chair ruled the complaint was Settled.

Complainant, K Hester, said: ABOUT COLLOIDAL SILVER I've looked into the medical uses of colloidal silver ...

In 1999 the FDA of the USA instituted a rule banning the use of colloidal silver in OTC products. This applies to any non-prescription colloidal silver or silver salt product claimed to be effective in preventing or treating any disease.

Colloidal silver can be applied directly to the skin for acne, burns, and eye, throat, skin, fungal and Staphylococcus infections. I.e. its been shown effective when used topically *but not when ingested*. Similarly, it has shown antibacterial properties in the test-tube *but not in the human body*.

I think it's best summarised by the USA National Center for Complementary and Integrated Health:

- There are no high quality studies on the health effects of taking colloidal silver, but we do have good evidence of its dangers.
- Claims made about the health benefits of taking colloidal silver aren't backed up by studies.
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has said that colloidal silver isn't safe or effective for treating any disease or condition.

NATURAL SENSE

Colloidal silver products arent necessarily dangerous if no health claims are made. However, Natural Sense make health claims which arent substantiated.

Specifically, they recommend CS as an oral antibiotic, which it isnt. From <http://naturalsense.co.nz/ColloidalSilver>:

...and move on to the digestive system, the colon, liver, kidneys, bladder, etc., where it can be absorbed into the bloodstream and then act to support the immune system. It does this by seeking out harmful single celled organisms (bacteria, viruses and fungi) and destroying them by disabling their oxygen metabolising enzyme and essentially suffocating them. The pathogen is then expelled from the body through the lymphatic and elimination systems.

They then list a number of conditions that can be treated. From this the following seem questionable: Stomach Upsets, Colds & Flu, Chronic Fatigue, Irritable Bowel, Bladder Infections, Crohn's, Colitis, Hay Fever, Mild Allergies, Aid To Eliminating Toxins, Strengthening The Immune System, Viral Infections, Digestion, Sinusitis

Based on the FDA's strong position I question whether colloidal silver is safe to be sold in this fashion at all. However, I understand that is perhaps outside the powers of the ASA...

The relevant provisions were Therapeutic and Health Advertising Code - Guideline 2(a), Principle 1, Principle 2.

The Chair noted the Complainant's concern that the advertisement made unsubstantiated health claims about Colloidal Silver.

The Chair acknowledged the Advertiser made changes to the website, after receiving the complaint, removing references which were of concern.

Given the Advertiser's co-operative engagement with the process and the self-regulatory action taken in amending the website, the Chair said that it would serve no further purpose to place the matter before the Complaints Board. The Chair ruled that the matter was settled.

Chair's Ruling: Complaint **Settled**