

COMPLAINT NUMBER	20/161
ADVERTISER	Reckitt Benckiser (NZ) Limited
ADVERTISEMENT	Strepsils Plus Anaesthetic Television
DATE OF MEETING	28 April 2020
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The television advertisement for Strepsils Plus Anaesthetic throat lozenges showed a cartoon emergency vehicle with “Strepsils” written on the bonnet racing through dense traffic. The voiceover said “When your throat is swollen or painful, standard lozenges may not be enough. Try Strepsils Plus Anaesthetic. Its advanced formula goes beyond our standard lozenges to numb pain fast.” The text “Read the label. Use as directed. If symptoms persist see your healthcare professional” appeared across the bottom of the screen, near the end of the advertisement.

The Chair ruled there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed.

Complaint: The advertisement was for Strepsils Throat Lozenges. Advert advised taking lozenges for a sore throat. I feel this was inappropriate advertising that may be misconstrued by an unwell person in the current Covid19 climate

The relevant provisions were Advertising Standards Code - Principle 1, Rule 1(h);

Principle 1: Social Responsibility: Advertisements must be prepared and placed with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and to society.

Rule 1(h) Health and well-being: Advertisements must not undermine the health and well-being of individuals.

The Chair noted the Complainant’s concerns the advertisement might be misconstrued in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Chair noted the disclaimer written across the bottom of the advertisement which said: “Read the label. Use as directed. If symptoms persist see your healthcare professional.”

The Chair said while a sore throat may sometimes be associated with the symptoms of Covid-19 the main symptoms are a dry cough, fever and breathlessness. The Chair said the advice to contact a doctor and seek a test if you have any symptoms of Covid-19 has been widely advertised since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Chair said while she appreciated the genuine concern of the Complainant, the advertisement did not meet the threshold to undermine the health and wellbeing of individuals.

The Chair ruled the advertisement was not in breach of Principle 1 or Rule 1(h) of the Advertising Standards Code.

The Chair ruled there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed.

Chair's Ruling: Complaint **No Grounds to Proceed**

APPEAL INFORMATION

According to the procedures of the Advertising Standards Complaints Board, all decisions are able to be appealed by any party to the complaint. Information on our Appeal process is on our website www.asa.co.nz. Appeals must be made in writing via email or letter within 14 calendar days of receipt of this decision.