

Letter to the Editor: The Pundit Speaks

By Randolph M. Howes, M.D., Ph.D.

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“Dr. Oz: Was He Part Of A Hoax ?”

Dr. Oz claims that he does not endorse any products but he has made untold millions via his television program, in which he has promoted countless unproven dietary supplements. A previous investigative [study](#) stated that no supporting evidence was found for one out of every three recommendations provided by The Dr. Oz Show. Dr. Oz, who is supposed to be giving accurate health advice, has morphed into a television celebrity and supplement pitch man. In particular, Oz was a major promoter of green coffee bean extract as being a miracle product for weight loss. You were told that you could lose 17 pounds in 12 weeks without changing your diet or exercising. Dr. Oz himself was seen in ads splashed around the Web calling it “The Dieter’s Secret Weapon.” Jessica Rich, Director of the FTC’s Bureau of Consumer Protection, said, “Lindsey Duncan and his companies made millions by falsely claiming that green coffee bean supplements cause significant and rapid weight loss.” Now, the maker of the supplement has agreed to settle charges that he and his companies deceptively touted the weight-loss benefits of green coffee bean extract. According to the [FTC’s complaint](#), shortly after Duncan agreed to appear as a “celebrity nutritionist” on The Dr. Oz Show, but before the show aired, he began manufacturing and selling the product. Crafting key phrases that he would later repeat on the show, Duncan created an online marketing campaign to exploit what’s known as the “Oz effect,” or the flood of Web searches and consumer demand for weight-loss supplements after a particular episode airs. According to the FTC’s complaint, Duncan did not disclose to The Dr. Oz Show producer his relationship to Pure Health. According to the settlement, Duncan and his companies must pay \$9 million to refund customers who bought the supplement and stop making weight-loss claims until the extract’s properties can be substantiated by two well-controlled clinical studies. Please remember, if a weight-loss claim sounds too good to be true, it likely is. Aidan Goggins, a pharmacist, and Glen Matten (both have masters degrees in nutritional medicine) have said, “Whatever it is, (the supplement manufacturers and profiteers) are putting your health in jeopardy and it’s high time it stopped. It is clear that it is no longer science but market forces that are driving the macabre antioxidant industry.” Vitamins have become a global mega-business, worth an estimated \$67.6 billion USD today. Goggins and Matten published a new book, *The Health Delusion*, to help combat misleading advertisements.

In the America that I love, please be cautious of so-called miracle weight loss pills. Exercise must be included with weight loss programs and be leery of creams and patches. Many just want your money.

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