

# Health and Wellness Advertising Claims: So, Is it Truthful?

**CCMI**  
Centre for Collaboration  
Motivation & Innovation

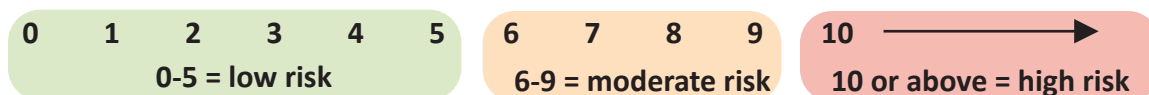
There are a lot of health and wellness adverts on the internet , TV, magazines, and newspapers. Most say they can help you to improve your health or quality of life. Some are helpful but many are scams.

**So is it the truth?**

## Instructions:

***Use the information on the other side of the page to check the advert and give it a “risk” score. The higher the score, the more likely it’s a scam!***

- Each box has a claim worth points.
- If you think the advert includes this, write those points in the blank circle on the right-hand side of the page.
- Then add up all your circled points to see if it may be a scam.



This tool was developed with and based on the research of Dr. Bernie Garrett at The University of British Columbia School of Nursing. For more details see Garrett, B. Murphy, S, Jamal, S., Macphee, M., Reardon, J., Cheung, W., Malia, E., Jackson, C. (2018) Internet Health Scams - Developing a taxonomy and risk-of-deception assessment tool. *Health & Social Care in the Community*. 2018; 1–15. <https://rdcu.be/5XCW>

Your points:

Does it offer a “free” gift or sample if you:

- participate in a phone call, or
- take out a subscription, or
- go to a meeting?

1 point

Does it include comments about people who recommend or dislike it, such as:

- “...millions of satisfied customers” or,
- “Mom’s tips/tricks,” or,
- “Doctors don’t want you to know this”

2 points

Does it make amazing claims, including before and after photos, or real-life stories?

2 points

Does it suggest the product is hard to find, rare or in short supply?

2 points

Does it suggest a well-known or respected person who likes or uses it?

1 point

Does it include many hard to understand words, with repetition or lots of jargon?

1 point

Does it claim to be based on science, but seems to lack a scientific approach and seems more like fake science to you?

2 points

Is there any real proof it actually works? (choose 1)

Very Low: No proof ..... 4 points

Low: Some proof, but unclear sources such as stories from users ..... 3 points

Moderate: Some proof, but no agreement by medical professionals it works ..... 2 points

Good: Solid proof from scientists but it has not been in use for long by medical professionals ..... 1 point

Excellent: Lots of solid proof from scientists and it has been used in hospitals or clinics by medical professionals for a long time ..... 0 points

Total:

0 1 2 3 4 5  
0-5 = low risk

6 7 8 9  
6-9 = moderate risk

10 —————>  
10 or above = high risk

