

FTC Updates Its Media Guide on Weight Loss Claims

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In 2003, the FTC issued *Red Flag: A Reference Guide for Media on Bogus Weight Loss Claim Detection*. The guide was intended to assist media outlets in spotting what the FTC believes to be deceptive weight loss claims. This week, the FTC released an updated version, [*Gut Check: A Reference Guide for Media on Spotting False Weight Loss Claims*](#).

The original guide identified seven types of weight loss claims that the FTC considers deceptive. The original guide explained each type of claim and provided examples. The new guide focuses on the same seven types of claims, with some revisions to the explanations and examples. The new guide also adds information about consumer testimonials and when the FTC believes that weight loss advertisements should disclose “generally expected results.”

Although the FTC’s guide is technically intended for media, industry should be aware of its contents. FTC enforcement action tends to focus on advertising using ~~Red-Flag~~ Gut Check claims.

The same day that it released the updated guide, the FTC and the Competition Bureau of Canada launched a [teaser site and quiz](#) intended to provide guidance on weight loss claims. The teaser site and quiz focus on the same seven types of claims.