

Serena Viswanathan Associate Director Division of Advertising Practices United States of America FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION Washington, D.C. 20580

August 12, 2021

CEASE AND DESIST DEMAND

VIA EMAIL TO Armored Nutrition

Re: Unsubstantiated claims for Coronavirus prevention and treatment

To Whom It My Concern:

This is to advise you that in July 2021, FTC staff reviewed your website at <u>https://www.armoredmultivitamins.com/</u>, where you sell Armored Adults Multivitamins, Armored Kids Multivitamins and Armored Adults 55+ Multivitamins. We determined that you were unlawfully advertising that certain products treat or prevent Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Some examples of Coronavirus prevention or cure claims included:

• At the top of the home page of your website at <u>https://www.armoredmultivitamins.com/</u>, you displayed a carousel of two images. One image included depictions of bottles of Armored Adults Multivitamins, Armored Kids Multivitamins, and Armored Adults 55+ Multivitamins. The other image was a depiction of a bottle of Armored Kids Multivitamins, including the entire product label, which stated:

"YOUR COVID-19 SHIELD Immune Protection Lung Protection"

• On the home page of your website at <u>https://www.armoredmultivitamins.com/</u> under the heading "ARMORED MULTIVITAMINS" you stated:

"Armored Multivitamins by Armored Pharmaceuticals provides a Premium Multivitamin that protects your lungs and boosts your immune system. Formulated with Echinacea (Immune Support), Vitamin D3, Zinc, Vitamin E (Lung Support) & Vitamin C Armored Multivitamins are the leading over the counter product for COVID-19 and other common viruses."

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• On the home page of your website at <u>https://www.armoredmultivitamins.com/</u> and on the page at <u>https://www.armoredmultivitamins.com/products/armored-kids</u>, you stated:

"ARMORED KIDS MULTIVITAMINS

"Armored Kids MultiGummies are multivitamins specially formulated for kids aged 5-12+.... Helps strengthen the immune system, lungs and maintain the body's ability to metabolize nutrients and provide antioxidants to maintain good health....

- The only one-a-day multivitamin with Echinacea for cold and respiratory tract infection fighting support[.]
- Supports lung health to protect against COVID-19's long term damaging effects[.]"
- On the home page of your website at <u>https://www.armoredmultivitamins.com/</u> and on the page at <u>https://www.armoredmultivitamins.com/products/armored-adults</u>, you stated:

"ARMORED ADULTS MULTIVITAMINS

Armored Adults are adult formulated multivitamins providing essential daily nutrients one daily multivitamins [sic] helps strengthen the immune system, lungs and maintain the body's ability to metabolize nutrients and provide antioxidants to support good health.

- The only one-a-day multivitamin with Echinacea for cold and respiratory tract infection fighting support[.]
- Supports lung health to protect against COVID-19's long term damaging effects[.]"
- On the home page of your website at <u>https://www.armoredmultivitamins.com/</u> and on the page at <u>https://www.armoredmultivitamins.com/products/armored-adults-55</u>, you stated:

"ARMORED ADULTS 55+ MULTIVITAMINS

Armored Adults 55+ are adult formulated multivitamins providing essential daily nutrients one daily multivitamins [sic] helps strengthen the immune system, lungs and maintain the body's ability to metabolize nutrients and provide antioxidants to support good health....

- The only one-a-day multivitamin with Echinacea for cold and respiratory tract infection fighting support[.]
- Supports lung health to protect against COVID-19's long term damaging effects[.]"

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- The website navigation menu on your website <u>https://www.armoredmultivitamins.com</u> included an option labeled "Research," which provided several links to other websites, including links labeled as follows:
 - o "Zinc Mineral Supplementation and COVID-19...
 - Vitamin-E as an Antioxidant for the Lungs...
 - Echinacea as a Remedy Against the Coronavirus...
 - Coronavirus: To Zinc or not to Zinc?...
 - Vitamins E and C in Maintaining Lung Health...
 - Vitamins Effective for Fighting COVID-19..."

It is unlawful under the FTC Act, 15 U.S.C. § 41 et seq., to advertise that a product can prevent, treat, or cure human disease unless you possess competent and reliable scientific evidence, including, when appropriate, well-controlled human clinical studies, substantiating that the claims are true at the time they are made. For COVID-19, no such study is currently known to exist for the products identified above. Thus, any coronavirus-related prevention or treatment claims regarding such products are not supported by competent and reliable scientific evidence. While the claims cited above are no longer on your website, you may not resume making such claims or promoting Armored Multivitamins to prevent or treat COVID-19.

You are also advised to review all other claims for your products and immediately cease and desist from making claims that are not supported by competent and reliable scientific evidence. We also note that is a violation of the FTC Act to falsely represent that a product is endorsed by a consumer or scientific expert.

Violations of the FTC Act may result in legal action seeking a Federal District Court injunction. In addition, pursuant to the COVID-19 Consumer Protection Act, Section 1401, Division FF, of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, P.L. 116-260, marketers who make deceptive claims about the treatment, cure, prevention, or mitigation of COVID-19 are subject to a civil penalty of up to \$43,792 per violation and may be required to pay refunds to consumers or provide other relief pursuant to Section 19(b) of the FTC Act, 15 U.S.C. § 57b(b).

Within 48 hours, please send a message to Richard Cleland, Assistant Director via electronic mail at rcleland@ftc.gov certifying that you have ceased making unsubstantiated claims for the products identified above.

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If you have any questions regarding compliance with the FTC Act, please contact Richard Cleland at 202-326-3088.

Very truly yours,

SERENA VISWANATHAN Date: 2021.08.11 18:44:06 -04'00'

Serena Viswanathan Associate Director Division of Advertising Practices

cc: Shopify via email to gov-inquiries@shopify.com