



United States of America
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20580

Serena Viswanathan
Acting Associate Director
Division of Advertising Practices

November 16, 2020

WARNING LETTER

VIA EMAIL TO contact@illuminateplasticsurgery.com

Dr. David Boudreault, MD
Illuminate Plastic Surgery
101 Addison Ave.
Palo Alto, CA 94301

Re: Unsubstantiated claims for Coronavirus prevention and treatment

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to advise you that FTC staff has reviewed your website at <https://www.illuminateplasticsurgery.com/> in November 2020. We have also reviewed your social media website at <https://www.instagram.com/dr.davidboudreault/>, where you direct consumers to your website at <https://www.illuminateplasticsurgery.com/> to schedule consultations and appointments for services including Thymosin Alpha-1 peptide therapy, high-dose intravenous Vitamin C, and ozone therapy. We have determined that you are unlawfully advertising that certain products or services treat or prevent Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Some examples of Coronavirus prevention or cure claims on your websites include:

- In a blog post titled “BOOST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM FOR FALL,” you state: “COVID-19 has all of us hyper-aware of our health. While the pandemic has turned the world on its head, the shifted focus on wellness is a small silver lining. Wellness treatments optimize healthy aging and physical performance on a cellular level so you’re able to perform at your best. One of our favorite ways to ensure that we’re

living our best life and staying as healthy as possible is a peptide injection. Hate needles? Hear us out anyway. In less than five minutes, a peptide injection has the ability to boost your immunity all while helping you to feel stronger, better and ready to take on anything.... With an emphasis on active, immune boosting ingredient Thymosin Alpha-1 (Ta1), your body will be equipped with everything it needs to stave off illness. Let's simplify. Thymosin Alpha-1 is a peptide made up of amino acids that are naturally found in trace amounts within the body. Like most amino acids, its primary purpose is to regulate the body's immune response. Thymosin Alpha-1, specifically, stimulates antibody production and activates the immune system and so it can kill bad bacteria and infections. It works by stimulating natural killer (NK) cells that directly attack virally infected cells. Due to this, it also slows down viral replication and increases antigens... [I]t is currently being used in clinical trials to combating [sic] the effects of the Coronavirus. With a proven track record of immunity-boosting powers, braving the needle for a quick shot is a no brainer.... Give us a call to book your appointment or learn more..."

[Blog post at <https://www.illuminateplasticsurgery.com/boost-your-immune-system-for-fall/>]

- In a blog post titled "BUILDING A CASE FOR THYMOSIN ALPHA 1 DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS," you state: "With the COVID-19 pandemic in full force, we're all looking for ways to optimize our immune systems. Thymosin alpha 1 is one of the most powerful peptides to enhance immunity... Pandemic or no pandemic, thymosin alpha 1 injections are a great thing to add to your self-care routine. But with COVID-19 in full force, thymosin alpha 1 can be a power [sic] protector against the virus specifically. Thymosin alpha 1 was tested in 2009 during the first pandemic of the century – H1N1v. It was found to not only enhance immunity, but also potentiate the effect of viral vaccines, particularly in immunocompromised patients. It has since been used in the treatment of several cancers and viral infections because of its direct influence on infected cells." At the bottom of the blog post you provide a link to schedule an appointment at <https://www.illuminateplasticsurgery.com/schedule/>.

[Blog post at <https://www.illuminateplasticsurgery.com/building-a-case-for-thymosin-alpha-1-during-the-covid-19-crisis/>]

- On your social media site at <https://www.instagram.com/dr.davidboudreault/>:
 - In a post on April 10, 2020, you state: "The Case for Thymosin alpha 1 during Covid 19[.] Thymosin alpha 1 is a naturally occurring peptide that has antibacterial, antiviral and antifungal effects while boosting our immune function... It's a simple, 30 sec treatment that can be done at home. Schedule your virtual consultation today to discuss what you can do to best prepare y our

body to reenter our new Covid19 world. #covid19 #coronavirus... #covid #coronatime.”

In the accompanying video, Dr. David Boudreault states: “Yesterday we brought up immune-modulating treatments and the most exciting of those is thymosin alpha-1... Most of us have probably heard that the young person is probably resistant to serious infection with coronavirus. One theory would be that we have less of this thymosin alpha-1 to help our body fight this immune response or help fight this virus... By bringing thymosin alpha-1 into the body we are actually upregulating a lot of the signaling pathways, a lot of these cells that fight these infections... it’s actually very specific to viral infections. Thymosin alpha-1 has been shown to decrease the viral replication rate... if you can decrease the amount of virus that replicates in the body, there is less virus around, it’s less infectious, it’s less contagious... Thymosin alpha-1 stimulates white blood cells... stimulates the dendritic cells.... and has a direct effect on viral replication.... [T]he mechanisms of actions that we discussed are really important in helping us fight and improve our immune function to help fight the coronavirus and other viral illnesses...”

- In a post on April 7, 2020, you state: “Not your average Covid19 update[.] Wellness, new website and immune boosting therapies coming your way! #thymosinalpha1 #ozonetherapy #highdosevitaminc #fastvitaminiv #glutathione #covid19 #coronavirus...”

In the accompanying video, Dr. David Boudreault states: “...We have been able to hear from and learn from some of the world thought leaders in these fields and come up with several immune boosting strategies that we are so excited to share with our patients. One of those in particular is Vitamin C... What I personally didn’t know before this was how effective high-dose Vitamin C, now this is a dose that you can’t even achieve orally, it’s given IV. IV high-dose Vitamin C is given to patients with cancer... other things like thymosin alpha-1, glutathione, ozone therapies... are all really really common treatments in this world where they have studied the effects on previous things, previous flus, previous viral illnesses like hepatitis and things and have found great results in these patient populations so these are real therapies offered by these doctors and we are excited to bring them to our patients.”

In the same video, Molly Boudreault states: “...One of the things that I think is important to drive home is these are not fluff treatments. These are treatments that are backed by science. These are treatments, as David mentioned, that were used during the H1N1 crisis and they are being used on COVID patients right now. Obviously, as it relates to COVID, we just don’t have the data yet but there is some really amazing evidence on how these treatments have affected the immune response and patients’ ability to recover from other very similar viruses.”

It is unlawful under the FTC Act, 15 U.S.C. § 41 *et seq.*, to advertise that a product or service 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 or services identified above. Thus, any coronavirus-related prevention or treatment claims regarding such products or services are not supported by competent and reliable scientific evidence. You must immediately cease making all such claims.

You are also advised to review all other claims for your products and services and immediately cease making claims that are not supported by competent and reliable scientific evidence.

Within 48 hours, please send a message to Richard Cleland, Assistant Director via electronic mail at rcleland@ftc.gov describing the specific actions you have taken to address the FTC's concerns. If you have any questions regarding compliance with the FTC Act, please contact Richard Cleland at 202-326-3088.

Very truly yours,

SERENA

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Serena Viswanathan
Acting Associate Director
Division of Advertising Practices