

# Warning about products claiming to treat or prevent the novel coronavirus

The TGA has identified certain therapeutic goods such as complementary medicines or disinfectants being inappropriately promoted for the prevention or treatment of novel coronavirus infections in Australia.

The promotion of therapeutic goods to consumers for the prevention or treatment of novel coronavirus is likely to contravene the legislative requirements for a range of reasons, including unsupported claims or making a restricted representation.

Advertisers are to be very careful when considering making therapeutic claims related to novel coronavirus.

There is a wide range of products being advertised in connection with novel coronavirus. Claims such as preventing the spread of coronavirus (for example, using face masks or disinfectants), or increasing immunity to coronavirus (for example, by taking supplements), are therapeutic use claims.

Advertisers should be aware of the following requirements:

- Any representation made in the advertising of therapeutic goods which refers to novel coronavirus (explicitly or by implication) is a 'restricted representation' and cannot be used without prior approval from the TGA.
- Any therapeutic claim made in relation to novel coronavirus must be supported by appropriate evidence and must not mislead.
- Advertising must not be inconsistent with any current public health campaigns. Current information on the novel coronavirus is available on the Department of Health's novel coronavirus page, as well as state and territory health department websites. For example, promoting a mask as a 'must have' to protect yourself and your family from coronavirus would conflict with the Department of Health's advice that masks are not necessary for everyone.

If you are advertising therapeutic goods in relation to the novel coronavirus, you should be aware there are sanctions and penalties for advertising that does not comply with the Act and the Code.

Advertisements for disinfectants (including those that are exempt from inclusion in the ARTG), are required to comply with the Act and the Code.

If you are intending to promote a disinfectant with explicit claims about killing novel coronavirus, to satisfy the Code requirements, there must be studies conducted with novel coronavirus to demonstrate this. In addition, prior restricted representation approval by TGA is needed.