



# FTC Sends Warning Letters to Online Sellers Making Zika Virus-Protection Claims

## Reminds Marketers That Claims Must Be Supported by Appropriate Scientific Evidence; Requires Recipients to Contact FTC Detailing Actions Taken to Address Agency's Concerns

FOR RELEASE

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Federal Trade Commission staff has sent 10 warning letters to online marketers selling products that purportedly provide protection from the Zika virus.

It appears that some online marketers may be trying to take advantage of consumer concerns about the mosquito-borne virus. The letters warn the recipients that Zika protection claims must be supported by competent and reliable scientific evidence in the form of well-controlled human clinical testing.

The products of concern include wristbands, patches, and stickers that purportedly can repel the mosquitos that carry Zika or otherwise protect users from the virus. The letters also point out that the testing supporting claims of protection from the Zika virus must use the mosquito species that are able to carry the virus -- and must be able to demonstrate that the repellent effects last as long as advertised.

In addition to warning the marketers that false or misleading claims may violate the FTC Act, subjecting them to legal action, the letters urge them to review the claims that they and their affiliates and distributors are making for their products, and delete or change them immediately if they cannot be substantiated by scientific evidence.

The letters also ask that the recipients report back to the FTC within 48 hours, detailing the specific actions they have taken to remove or change potentially false, misleading, or unsupported claims. The FTC staff is not releasing the names of the marketers sent warning letters.

The Federal Trade Commission works to promote competition, and protect and educate consumers. You can learn more about consumer topics and file a consumer complaint online or by calling 1-877-FTC-HELP (382-4357). Like the FTC on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, read our blogs and subscribe to press releases for the latest FTC news and resources.

## Contact Information

### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

Mitchell J. Katz  
*Office of Public Affairs*  
202-326-2161

### **STAFF CONTACTS:**

Shira D. Modell

*Bureau of Consumer Protection*  
202-326-3116

Karen Mandel  
*Bureau of Consumer Protection*  
202-326-2491

