

ILLINOIS STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY

**Resolution 02.2019-31
(A-19)**

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Members

Subject: Clarify Advertising and Contents of Herbal Remedies and Dietary
Supplements

Referred to: Council on Medical Service

1 Whereas, much misleading information is contained in advertising of herbal
2 remedies and dietary supplements; and

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4 Whereas, herbal remedies and dietary supplements are sold as food but advertised
5 in such a way as to imply some therapeutic effect of their contents; and

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7 Whereas, Americans spend billions of dollars each year on herbal remedies and
8 dietary supplements in the hope that doing so will enhance their own good health in
9 some way; and

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11 Whereas, herbal remedies and dietary supplements are not regulated by the FDA
12 and consequently the identities of their ingredients, active or inactive, and their
13 concentrations are mostly unknown; and

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15 Whereas, herbal remedies and dietary supplements are not subject to strict
16 regulation, therefore they may or may not have the ingredients listed on the label
17 (References); and

18
19 Whereas, some herbal remedies and dietary supplements have been documented
20 to have active medications not indicated on the label and some have been documented
21 to contain toxic drugs (References); and

22
23 Whereas, patients seeking relief of symptoms may turn to herbal remedies and
24 dietary supplements before consulting a medical professional and thus delay the proper
25 diagnosis and therapy for their condition; and

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27 Whereas, any merchandise that claims to have health benefits is not food; and
28 therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, that the Illinois State Medical Society (ISMS) adopt policy that the
2 ingredients of all herbal remedies and dietary supplements sold over-the-counter to the
3 public be analyzed and their contents indicated on the labels; and be it further

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5 RESOLVED, that ISMS adopt policy that no herbal remedy or dietary
6 supplement be advertised in such a way as to lead consumers to believe it has a
7 therapeutic effect beyond its nutritional value; and be it further

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9 RESOLVED, that the ISMS Delegation to the American Medical Association
10 (AMA) request the AMA to work with the National Center for Complementary and
11 Integrative Health (NCCIH), the federal agency responsible for oversight of herbal
12 remedies and dietary supplements, to institute stricter guidelines for advertising and
13 labeling of these products so that consumers will be informed of what they are
14 purchasing; and be it further

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16 RESOLVED, that the ISMS request the AMA to support a licensing body
17 through legislation for manufacturers of dietary supplements and herbal remedies, with
18 the requirement that those manufacturers must supply proof that their products have
19 health benefits; and be it further

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21 RESOLVED, that the AMA urge that the increased cost of a stricter NCCIH
22 program on dietary supplements and herbal remedies be paid for by the manufacturers
23 who produce them.

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Fiscal Note:

N/A

Existing ISMS policy related to this issue:

Members of the ISMS shall not coerce their patients to purchase medications, vitamins, nutritional supplements or medical devices from the physician's practice; and Members of the ISMS should not recruit their patients to participate in marketing programs in which the physician personally benefits, financially or otherwise, from the efforts of their patients. (HOD 1999; Last BOT Review 2012)

House of Delegates adopted Substitute Resolution B218 (A-17), Advertising Restrictions and Limited Use of Dietary Supplements, which calls for the Illinois State Medical Society to introduce a resolution to the American Medical Association (AMA) House of Delegates asking the AMA to study the need for Food and Drug Administration regulation of dietary supplements. (HOD 2017)

It is the policy of ISMS that all non-FDA-approved health care-related products advertised on all media that are promoted with respect to health conditions, display the warning: "These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease," prominently stated throughout the advertisement in print or voice for consideration by the consumer, and that all advertisements of products not approved by the FDA include information about the evidence-based risks and benefits of the product. (HOD 2016)