



ATTORNEY GENERAL'S SCAM ALERT



A Consumer Protection Alert from Oregon Attorney General John Kroger

Consumer Protection Hotline: 1-877-877-9392.

Online: www.oregonattorneygeneral.gov.

Follow us on twitter! <http://twitter.com/oregonscamalert>

January 6, 2010

ATTORNEY GENERAL KROGER WARNS OF HEALTH PRODUCT SCAMS

With the season of resolutions upon us, Attorney General John Kroger warns Oregonians of weight loss scams. A common resolution for the New Year is to lead a more healthy life and lose some of the excess weight gained from holiday revelries. It is especially during this time of year that scammers exploit our desire to slim-down with phony products that claim to help you lose weight with little to no effort. Many weight loss scams suggest you can achieve "great results" without exercise or modifying your diet.

At best, fad diets and fake health products might result in short-term temporary weight loss but can be dangerous if followed over a longer period. In 2009, over 300 Oregon consumers received refunds totaling more than \$180,000 from owners of the defunct diet chain LA Weight Loss Franchise Company based on a settlement reached by the Oregon Department of Justice. The lawsuit alleged that the company had no competent and reliable scientific evidence to back up health claims about their "dietary supplements," including that one normalized blood pressure.

Attorney General Kroger offers the following tips to spot weight loss scams. You should proceed with caution if a product demonstrates one of the following:

- Lacks scientific evidence or a demonstrated link between the product and the promoted health benefits.
- Sold only through the internet, individuals, telemarketers, mail, or on television.
- Claims fast weight loss without exercise or diet.
- Uses terms such as "miraculous breakthrough" and "effortless."
- Promotes one particular ingredient as the central factor for success.
- Demands large advance payments, or requires you enter into long-term contracts.

The Oregon Department of Justice is committed to keeping fraudulent businesses and products out of Oregon. If you or someone you know has fallen victim to a health product or weight loss scam, contact the Consumer Hotline at 1-877-877-9392. Don't let the scammers foil your New Year's resolutions.