



FTC Order Stops the Marketer of “Thrive” Supplement from Making Baseless Claims It Can Treat, Prevent, or Reduce the Risks from COVID-19

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The California-based marketer of a supplement called Thrive, which consists mainly of Vitamin C and herbal extracts, is barred from continuing to make baseless claims that it can treat, prevent, or reduce the risk of COVID-19, under an administrative settlement with the Federal Trade Commission announced today.

The FTC proposed order also bars the marketer of Thrive, Marc Ching, from making similarly unsupported cancer treatment or prevention claims for products containing CBD. The case against Ching is the FTC's first against a marketer of a supposed COVID-19-related health product. In April 2020, [the FTC announced that Ching agreed to a preliminary federal court order](#) that imposed similar terms.

“There’s no proof that this product will prevent or treat COVID-19, and no proof that any CBD product will treat cancer,” said Andrew Smith, Director of the FTC’s Bureau of Consumer Protection. “This case, and the hundreds of warning letters we’ve sent, demonstrate that we will remain vigilant against companies that lack the scientific proof to back up their claims.”

To date, the FTC has sent more than 275 letters to other companies warning them against falsely promoting or advertising COVID-19 products or therapies as effective treatments.

According to the FTC’s [administrative complaint](#), since at least December 2018, Ching has advertised and sold Thrive online, through his Whole Leaf Organics website, and in March 2020 he began marketing it as an “anti viral wellness booster” that treats, prevents, or reduces the risk of COVID-19. In addition, the FTC alleged Ching falsely stated that these benefits of Thrive were clinically proven.

The complaint also alleged that Ching used his Whole Leaf Organics website to advertise and sell three CBD-containing products, CBD-EX, CBD-RX, and CBD-Max, falsely claiming they were effective cancer treatments. CBD-EX is an

ingestible capsule consisting mainly of a combination of cannabidiol and herbal extracts. CBD-RX and CBD-Max are oils composed primarily of CBD and hemp extract.

In addition to barring Ching's false and unsubstantiated health claims, the order also requires Ching to send written notices to customers and retailers of Thrive, clearly explaining that it will not treat, prevent, or reduce the risk of COVID-19. Ching also must tell customers and retailers that CBD-EX, CBD-RX, and CBD-Max will not treat cancer. Finally, the letters must inform customers and retailers of Ching's settlement with the Commission.

The Commission vote to accept the proposed consent agreement was 3-1-1, with Commissioner Rohit Chopra voting no and Commission Rebecca Kelly Slaughter not participating. The FTC published a description of it [in the Federal Register](#). The agreement will be subject to public comment for 30 days after publication in the Federal Register after which the Commission will decide whether to make the proposed consent order final. Instructions for filing comments are in the published notice. Once processed, comments will be posted on Regulations.gov.

NOTE: The Commission issues an administrative complaint when it has "reason to believe" that the law has been or is being violated, and it appears to the Commission that a proceeding is in the public interest. When the Commission issues a consent order on a final basis, it carries the force of law with respect to future actions. Each violation of such an order may result in a civil penalty of up to \$43,280.

The Federal Trade Commission works to promote competition and to [protect and educate consumers](#). You can [learn more about consumer topics](#) and report scams, fraud, and bad business practices online at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](#). Like the FTC on [Facebook](#), follow us on [Twitter](#), get [consumer alerts](#), read our [blogs](#), and [subscribe to press releases](#) for the latest FTC news and resources.

PRESS RELEASE REFERENCE:

["Thrive" Supplement Marketer Agrees to Preliminary Order Barring Him from Claiming It Can Treat, Prevent, or Reduce the Risks Associated with COVID-19](#)

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