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Dr. Frosch and colleagues' research provides important counterevidence to the pharmaceutical industry's claim that consumer advertising has educational value [1]. We would like to suggest an additional point which will strengthen their conclusions. Zoloft advertisements (one of the data points captured in their analysis) claim that various mental disorders are caused by a lack of serotonin and that this putative imbalance is remedied by Zoloft. However, these claims are contradicted by a large body of empirical evidence and we have argued that they are misleading and incongruent with FDA labeling (2). Providing metaphorical or theoretical explanations as factual will likely increase the sales of Zoloft, but it will not provide consumers with educational content.

Thus, future studies should address not only the type of appeal made to consumers, but also the veracity of the information provided.

References

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2. Lacasse JR, Leo J. Serotonin and Depression: A Disconnect between the Advertisements and the Scientific Literature. *PLoS Medicine* Vol. 2, No. 12, e392 doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.0020392

Competing interests: None declared

Citation: Lacasse, J.R., & Leo, J. (February 3, 2007). Truthiness in direct-to-consumer advertising. *Annals of Family Medicine*. Originally published at www.annafammed.org/cgi/letters/5/1/6#5179.