

# Be SCAM SAVVY

Doctors advise a healthy diet and regular exercise as the only tried-and-true weight loss method. Nonetheless, many companies advertise weight loss “miracles” or “tricks” that they promise will help you slim down without the work. Some even claim to be “approved by doctors.” But should you try them?

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) warn against so-called “miracle products” with claims that seem too good to be true. Many supplements have ingredients that aren’t listed on the label or don’t have FDA approval. Some may interact with medications you take or cause dangerous side effects. In fact, around 20,000 people end up in the emergency room each year due to problems with “natural” dietary supplements, according to a study in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

As for creams and gadgets, such as waist trainers or body shapers, their effects are only temporary at best. A cream can make your skin more supple, but it won’t trim fat or shrink your body. Some waist trainers and corsets can actually be dangerous if worn too tightly. They can cause problems with digestion and may even cause broken ribs. And, if they restrict your breathing, you can faint.

*If you need help with weight loss, talk with your doctor about safe – and effective – ways to get healthy and move the scale in the right direction.*



## SCAMS: HOW TO SPOT ONE

### *The FTC says to avoid products with these claims:*

- Lose weight without diet or exercise.
- Eat anything you want and lose weight.
- A pill is all you need.
- It works for everyone.
- You can lose weight simply by wearing a device or using a skin cream.
- You can lose a pound per day (or any extreme weight loss claims).

### REPORTING SCAMS

To report misleading or false weight loss product claims, go to: [ftccomplaintassistant.gov](http://ftccomplaintassistant.gov). By alerting the FTC, you could help someone else avoid the same scam, and may even save them from harm.