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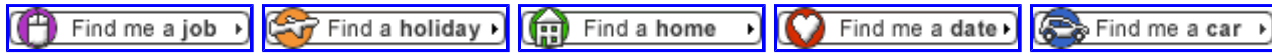
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Cosmetic firms mislead women over skin creams with 'sci-fi' jargon

By PAUL SIMS - [More by this author »](#) Last updated at 09:51am on 21st December 2007

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Sci-fi jargon: Fancy wording is misleading customers over the effects of face cream

Cosmetic firms are misleading women over the effectiveness of skincare creams with incomprehensible scientific jargon, it was claimed yesterday.

The consumer group Which? accused companies including L'Oreal and Garnier of baffling consumers into buying their products.

Television adverts are filled with references to pentapeptides, lipopeptides and hyaluronic acid and claim products will "refuel surface skin cells" resulting in a "dewy glow".

But after posing as a customer and contacting three companies for a better explanation, Which? said the "evidence" to back up the claims is confusing - even to a trained scientist.

It said: "Pentapeptides, hyaluronic acid and omega 3 might sound impressive, but scratch beneath the surface of the glossy cosmetic adverts and the claims of some companies don't make a whole lot of sense."

The consumer magazine said it approached customer services at Olay Regenerist, Garnier Nutritionist Omega Skin and L'Oreal Derma Genesis and asked how its ingredients actually worked on the skin.

They showed the results to Sense About Science, a charity that promotes understandable science, which claimed customers are being "fobbed off".

After reading Which?'s transcripts, the scientists said they were no wiser about how pentapeptides, lipopeptides or omega 3 managed to "help with the signs of ageing" or "improve the appearance of your skin".

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CLAIM AND COUNTER-CLAIM

Olay Regenerist claim: 'Pentapeptides are fragments of molecules. They're found naturally throughout the body so they originate from the body.'

Fact: 'Laboratory-made pentapeptides may be chemically indistinguishable from those that occur naturally, but they're not extracting them from real cells.'

Garnier Nutritionist claim: 'Lipopeptides are a natural stimulant that helps the skin.'

Fact: 'Certain lipopeptides can be potent stimulants - of the immune system. But you cannot really link stimulation of the immune system with skin rejuvenation.'

Dr Aarathi Prasad, for the charity, said: "They are taking the real science out of context so it becomes bad science.

"The words sound cutting edge and are psychologically tantalising, but it's potentially more sci-fi than solid science.

"The words are not clear-cut, even to scientists.

"They imply an effect, but they don't really hold up to scrutiny."

A spokesman for L'Oreal said: "Each ingredient is developed specifically for a functional benefit and often represents many years of research.

"Some are established dermatological ingredients and some are developed by L'Oreal scientists and are given names which reflect their molecular origin.

"Hyaluronic acid is, in fact, widely recognised by dermatologists as a high-powered hydrating ingredient which is naturally present in the skin, and which helps lock moisture in the skin."

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11 people have commented on this story so far. Tell us what you think below.

Here's a sample of the latest comments published. You can click [view all](#) to read all comments that readers have sent in.

The women are buying a 'hope' and a 'dream' and nothing will stop them from spending untold millions in the desperate attempt to remain youthful.

- Jerry Scroggin, Phoenix, Arizona US

Why are Trading Standards not involved in policing these adverts? Surely the false images and computer modified pictures used by companies to lie to women should also be illegal?

- G Mac, Winchester UK

There are always fools, and if you believe anything you are told by these advertisers, more fool you.

- Karen, West Midlands

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[Bea and Eugenie shine as Royals brave the rain for traditional Sandringham service](#)

Princesses Beatrice and Eugenie led the way in the fashion stakes in jaunty hats as they mingled with the crowds at Sandringham



[Elle MacPherson strips off and gets a piece of the surf action](#)

Model Elle MacPherson clearly isn't the shy type as she stripped off in a beach car park to indulge in a spot of her favourite sport - surfing



['My joy at finally becoming a mother after losing eight babies to miscarriages'](#)

After eight miscarriages, Sarah Whitman feared she would never become a mother... but then somehow her luck changed and Maya was born - a 7lb 1oz bundle of healthy baby



[Why I feel honoured to be a gay icon, by David Beckham, as he admits he lets Posh choose his clothes](#)

If the thongs and sarongs weren't enough of a giveaway, then David Beckham's latest confession certainly is. The footballer admitted yesterday that his wife Victoria likes to dress him - while he loves being a gay icon



[Chris Evans invites ex-wife Billie to hold reception at his place after her New Year's Eve wedding](#)

This is the £3.2million farmhouse where Chris Evans is spending his first Christmas with new bride - and where the DJ has invited ex-wife Billie Piper to stage her wedding reception




[Little Britton: Fresh-faced Fern before she piled on the pounds](#)

TV star Fern Britton has famously dropped four stone from a size 20 to a size 14. But in newly-revealed photos taken in the 1980s, Fern is seen with a sensationally slim waist, after weekly work-outs in the gym



[Pregnant Lily Allen looks worn out as she does some last minute Christmas shopping](#)

Despite her multi-million pound fortune, it seems that singer Lily Allen could still not resist stepping out for some last minute Christmas sale shopping. However, it seems as though her pregnancy could be starting to take its toll already on the 22-year-old as she looked exhausted by the end of her trip

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Prostate cancer is killing one man every hour in the UK.



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DON'T MISS...



Revealed: Celebrity Christmas getaways...

Find out where stars like Simon Cowell, the Beckhams, the Minogue sisters and Amy Winehouse hide away for Christmas



Downsizing Jordan: How Katie Price shrank her assets in time for Xmas

They are her most famous physical attribute but it appears the model has had a dramatic breast reduction



Britney flips at paparazzi - then takes a photographer on a date

Britney Spears's love-hate relationship with the paparazzi took a surprising turn over the weekend



X Factor's Leon Jackson is the Christmas number one - as he splits with his lover

Leon hits the top spot - but breaks up with his girlfriend because he doesn't want distractions



[Alesha: 'I've gone from suicidal to Strictly Come Dancing queen – now I'm set to make £5m'](#)

Alesha reveals that she was contemplating suicide this time last year



[Fabulous Fabio! England boss Capello can still strip off to tiny trunks at 61](#)

Wearing extremely tight swimming trunks, the new England boss looks in remarkably good shape



[Fairytale of New York's Shane MacGowan started drinking aged FOUR](#)

Pogues hellraiser Shane MacGowan has revealed that he started drinking before he started school



[Fergie's hot Arctic Christmas date with multi-millionaire](#)

The Duchess of York is icy temperatures and only four hours of light a day to be with her new beau



[Grey's Anatomy star Katherine Heigl weds musician fiance](#)

The loved-up couple married at a private reception where they were joined by Heigl's co-stars



[Amy's prison visits restricted after husband 'fails drug test'](#)

Amy Winehouse's husband Blake Fielder-Civil has allegedly tested positive for drugs while in prison



['This isn't the country I grew up in. No one speaks a word of English these days,' says Dame Shirley Bassey](#)

Talent shows are destroying talent... the streets aren't safe... Dame Shirley lets rip
[All showbiz news »](#)

[FANCY THAT](#)



[The ugly swan with a crooked neck finds love at last](#)

Crinkly the swan was born with such kinks in her neck that she struggled to fly or attract a suitor...until now



[Oh la la ... Miss France loses her crown over 'suggestive' yoghurt snaps](#)

Miss France has been ordered to hand back her sash after eating yoghurt provocatively



[The Christmas hit that only dogs can hear](#)

A version of Silent Night has been recorded at such high frequencies it cannot be heard by humans - and it's reached No 3 in the charts!



[The tiny fish that dice with death... to clean giant Manta Ray's mouth](#)

Rays have huge mouths ready to devour anything. But these tiny blue fish are not in any danger...



[Amazing 3D pavement art brings Father Christmas's grotto to life](#)

Viewed at the correct angle, an ingenious combination of reality and art makes this painting appear 3D



['One is on YouTube': The Queen gets web-savvy](#)

This year's Queen's speech is to be posted on the video-sharing website YouTube for the first time



[Revealed: CBeebies' Igglypiggle is really a rocker from Liverpool](#)

Until now, the identity of the actor who stars in In The Night Garden had remained a closely guarded secret...



[How to carve the perfect Christmas Day turkey - like an 18th-century gentleman](#)

Carving the Christmas turkey is an art form, but the task was even more of a burden for a gentleman in 1791

[More fancy that >>](#)

TODAY'S SPORT



Don't pick the turnips Fabio - New England boss does a bit of Xmas shopping

Fabio Capello was on dangerous ground shopping for Xmas groceries in Marbella



Beckham - Fergie decided my time was up at United

Beckham has revealed he left United because Sir Alex Ferguson believed it was time for him to go



EXCLUSIVE: Referees are the real grass-roots heroes, reveals Poll

'They are there because they love the game and want to serve football'



It's all muscle not fat, insists bulked-up West Ham's Ashton

Dean Ashton says his bulked up frame is not the result of too much of the good life

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IN OUR OPINION

Daily Mail

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[COMMENT: Take responsibility..not these pills](#)

Drugs cannot be a panacea for perceived deficiencies of body shape, intelligence, or anything else



[ROBIN PAGE: Up at dawn, hard at work on a farm, now that's the way to spend Boxing Day!](#)

Forget the sales... Christmas is the time to get back to nature



[MAX HASTINGS: That's enough indulgence - I want to return to real life](#)

That's enough Christmas telly, burnt sausages and screaming children. I'm aching for real life again...
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