

Alcohol health claims on radio

Advertising Guidance (broadcast)

Legal, decent, honest and truthful



Foreword

The Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) offers guidance on the interpretation of the UK Code of Advertising (the CAP Code) in relation to non-broadcast marketing communications.

The Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice (BCAP) offers guidance on the interpretation of the UK Code of Broadcast Advertising (the BCAP Code) in relation to broadcast marketing communications.

Advertising Guidance is intended to guide advertisers, agencies and media owners how to interpret the Codes but is not a substitute for those Codes. Advertising Guidance reflects CAP's and/or BCAP's intended effect of the Codes but neither constitutes new rules nor binds the ASA Councils in the event of a complaint about an advertisement that follows it.

For pre-publication advice on specific non-broadcast advertisements, consult the CAP Copy Advice team by telephone on 020 7492 2100, by fax on 020 7404 3404 or you can log a written enquiry via our [online request form](#).

For advice on specific radio advertisements, consult the [Radio Centre](#), and for TV advertisements, [Clearcast](#).

For the full list of Advertising Guidance, please [visit our website](#).

19.18: “Advertisements for alcoholic drinks may give factual statements about product contents, including comparisons, but must not make any health claims, which include fitness or weight-control claims.

The only permitted nutrition claims are “low alcohol”, “reduced alcohol” and “reduced energy” and any claim likely to have the same meaning for the audience.”

Notes

The starting point is whether a health or beneficial nutrition claim is being made. For example words such as ‘light’ or ‘lite’ may in context clearly relate only to flavour or colour, and not to nutrition and so rule 19.18 would not apply

If made, numerical statements of the number of calories per unit should be made clear.

Health claims, including fitness, exercise or weight control claims, are not permitted.

Nutrition claims are acceptable only if referring to low alcohol levels, or the reduction of the alcohol content, or the reduction of energy content. So claims such as “light” or “lite” (referring to alcohol content) or “reduced calories” are permissible. Numerical statements of calorie or carbohydrate content should not be qualified, for example by words such as “only”. Claims such as “reduced sugar”, “half sugar” or “reduced/low carbohydrate” are not acceptable, since they are not energy claims.

Factual comparisons relating to permitted nutrition claims may be made either “internally”, between an advertiser’s products (for example, if the calorie content has been reduced or is different from another product in the range) or between the advertiser’s product and competitor products. In order not to mislead, the reduction or difference should be significant. In the case of a reduced energy claim, the energy value should be reduced by at least 30% and should be accompanied by a clear statement of the number of calories per unit of alcohol. If a comparison is made, the comparison must take into account a range of foods in the same category, and the difference in energy value must be stated.

If a trade mark or brand name on its own implies an impermissible nutrition claim for an alcoholic drink, the advertisement should include a related permissible nutrition claim as described above. Trademarks or brand names cannot be used if they may be construed as making a health claim for an alcoholic drink.

For health and nutrition claims for foods generally, advertisers should refer to Regulation (EC) 1924/2006. Article 4(3) concerns alcoholic drinks. Transitional provisions may apply, for example for pre 1 January 2005 brand names. Advertisers will be expected to be in a position clearly to establish the applicability of any transitional provision.

Committee of Advertising Practice

Mid City Place, 71 High Holborn

London WC1V 6QT

Telephone 020 7492 2200

Textphone 020 7242 8159

Email: enquiries@cap.org.uk

 [@CAP_UK](https://twitter.com/CAP_UK)

Legal, decent, honest and truthful

