

Big fine for Nurofen in Australia over misleading claims

December 16 2016

Drug giant Reckitt Benckiser was slapped with a Aus\$6 million (US\$4.4 million) fine Friday for making misleading claims about its popular Nurofen Specific Pain brand in Australia.

The country's consumer watchdog took action against the company in 2015, disputing Nurofen packaging claims that products in the range were formulated to treat different types of [pain](#), when the [active ingredient](#) was identical.

The Federal Court last year ruled the British-based multinational engaged in deceptive conduct between 2011 and 2015 with the main ingredient, ibuprofen lysine, the same in all the products with none better at treating one type of pain than others.

It fined the group Aus\$1.7 million, but the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) appealed, claiming it was inadequate and did not serve as an effective deterrent.

The court Friday revised the penalty to Aus\$6 million "to ensure that Reckitt Benckiser and other 'would-be wrongdoers' think twice and decide not to act against the strong public interest".

ACCC chairman Rod Sims said a bigger fine was appropriate "given the longstanding and widespread nature of the conduct, and the substantial sales and profit that was made".

The case revolved around Nurofen Back Pain, Nurofen Period Pain, Nurofen Migraine Pain and Nurofen Tension Headache products.

The original ruling ordered that they be removed from retail shelves and packets amended.

Nurofen denied it deliberately deceived consumers and said it had cooperated with the ACCC throughout.

In Australia, Reckitt Benckiser markets and supplies a range of consumer health and household brands, including Nurofen, Mortein, Clearasil, Finish, Airwick and Gaviscon.

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