

**Speak for two to three minutes on one of these topics.**

- 1-Explain what "unethical" means and give examples of unethical acts.
- 2-Do Americans stress more about small body imperfections (like thin eyelashes) than people in your country?
- 3-How important is your physical appearance to your success in the business world?
- 4-Do you think television and movies have a bad effect on the way young people dress and behave?
- 5-How much are young people in your country effected by American TV, movies and advertising?

**Take turns reading aloud, the article below. Underline any words or phrases you don't understand. Discuss these with the class.****Drug Advertising**

Do pharmaceutical companies, through their commercials, promote medical conditions? Or do they educate consumers about conditions and send them to their doctors, thus performing a much needed service?

There is no general consensus. Every developed country in the world, save the United States and New Zealand, prohibits direct-to-consumer pharmaceutical advertising. Opponents of direct-to-consumer advertising (DTC) argue the FDA has limited resources and many claims that are not proven make it on air.

They say that the ads are often not for life-threatening and treatable diseases like hypertension, but rather for "lifestyle" problems like thin eyelashes, insomnia, toenail fungus and erectile dysfunction, and that these drugs can have severe side effects. They cite ethical issues when a doctor accepts promotional products from pharmaceutical companies.

Vioxx, an anti-inflammatory used primarily to treat arthritis, was aggressively marketed with over \$100 million in promotion that featured Olympians Dorothy Hammill and Bruce Jenner. It became widely known and prescribed before being pulled off the market for doubling risk for a heart attack or stroke, but not before being prescribed to millions of people. The FDA estimates that Vioxx was responsible for as many as 139,000 heart attacks and almost 30,000 deaths from heart attack or stroke.

Proponents of drug advertising say ads inform consumers about important, treatable health conditions and encourage doctor/patient dialogue. They argue the ads send sick patients to the doctor's office. They say these better-informed consumers get improved quality of care. They argue that the advertising reaches low-income consumers who gain valuable information and then are motivated to seek medical help.

There are a number of bills being debated in Congress to limit or prohibit DTC advertising. About \$235 billion is spent on prescription drugs annually and almost \$5 billion in DTC TV, radio, magazine and newspaper advertising, according to Nielsen Media Research.

**Discuss in your group:**

1-Should drug advertising be allowed?

2-Do you think doctors who enjoy free dinners and other perks from pharmaceutical companies are more likely to prescribe drugs from that company?

3-Do you think it is ethical for a doctor to take free perks from a pharmaceutical company? Is it ethical for the pharmaceutical company to offer them?

4-Are these problems in your country? Explain why or why not.