

## Shape Magazine bans slimming ads

The promotion of slimming agents within women's magazines has been subject to long-standing debate with diet pills increasingly at the fore of controversy.

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As South Africa's leading health, wellness and beauty magazine, Shape's editorial positioning has always been to help women make the most of their lives by providing well-researched and informative encouragement for a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

Recently, a quantitative reader survey with a sample of 938 respondents conducted on Shape's behalf, highlighted just how seriously women were taking slimming product advertising. "Sixty eight percent of our readers said they believed it is unethical for Shape to accept ads for slimming tablets or drops," said Shape publisher Lani Carstens, "and following increasing pressure from various sources, we took the responsible decision to ban all future ads for slimming products in Shape. Although we will take a knock in terms of advertising revenue in the short term, our editorial integrity is paramount and advertisers support this position."

Commented Shape editor Heather Parker: "We have always been ambivalent about slimming products and when the majority of (our) readers said they thought it was problematic, we decided to put our readers first

In light of this, Shape will no longer accept adverts for slimming drops or pills, effective from the May 2004 issue. Ads for cellulite creams and supplements (e.g. CLA and shakes), will, however, still be accepted - provided they conform to the guidelines stipulated by the Medicines and Related Substances Control Act.

Legislation on advertising guidelines for the weight-loss/slimming sector is still being discussed between the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA), the Medicines Control Council (MCC) and the MPASA. These guidelines are likely to be legislated by December 2004.

For a précised version of these guidelines, go to [www.shapemag.co.za](http://www.shapemag.co.za).