# Zoe criticised by ASA over misleading claims about Daily30+ supplement



Health app and nutrition brand Zoe has come under fire from the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) following a social media advert that claimed its Daily30+ supplement is “just real food.” This paid Facebook advertisement, which featured a quote from prominent investor Steven Bartlett, stated that the supplement is a “plant-based wholefood supplement,” reinforcing the idea that it is devoid of ultra-processed elements.

In its ruling, the ASA challenged this claim, pointing out that at least two ingredients in the Daily30+ formulation—chicory root inulin and nutritional yeast flakes—have undergone significant processing and therefore cannot be classified as whole foods. The ASA noted that these processing methods exceeded what consumers might reasonably interpret as minimal processing, thereby contradicting the claim made in the advertisement.

Professor Tim Spector, co-founder of Zoe, expressed his disdain for the ASA's verdict, labelling it “nothing short of disgraceful.” He argued that the decision adds to the existing confusion surrounding the food system, which is already laden with misleading information concerning health and nutrition. Spector further asserted that the company's defence was robust; Zoe contended that the ad did not assert it contained no ultra-processed foods (UPFs) but rather positioned its product as a healthier alternative to commonly known ultra-processed supplements, which typically include artificial additives.

The ASA's investigation was prompted by a complaint from an unnamed professor of nutrition and food science. In its analysis, the ASA concluded that while consumers generally understand that most food products have been processed in some manner—such as cleaning or chopping—the processing methods used to produce chicory root inulin and nutritional yeast were too extensive. The extraction of chicory root inulin, for instance, involves intricate steps including slicing, steeping, and enzymatic treatment, which the ASA considered moved it beyond minimal processing.

Spector vehemently disagreed with the ASA's interpretation, stating, "There is no scientific basis for the ASA’s conclusion – and it risks misleading the public at a time when clarity around healthy eating is more important than ever." He voiced concern that targeting a product designed to improve health undermines public health initiatives, especially while a lack of action persists regarding the marketing and advertising of unhealthy foods to children and vulnerable populations.

This incident is not Zoe's first encounter with the ASA. In a previous ruling from August 2023, the authority found another advertisement involving Bartlett misleading for failing to disclose his investment in Zoe, which was crucial information that could influence consumer perception. The ASA reiterated the necessity for transparency regarding commercial relationships in influencer marketing, as many consumers might interpret endorsements from individuals like Bartlett as independent testimonials.

Zoe is not alone in facing scrutiny; its advertisements have been scrutinised alongside those for the competitor brand, Huel, which featured Bartlett as well. In these simultaneous complaints, the ASA ruled that both brands neglected to adequately inform the public of Bartlett's connections, which could mislead consumers regarding the endorsements presented in the adverts.

The challenges for Zoe extend beyond regulatory scrutiny; the company has also made substantial cuts to its workforce as part of a cost-reduction strategy amid economic pressures. This was highlighted earlier this year when CEO Jonathan Wolf indicated that these cuts were essential for sustainability, as the company's operational burn rate was deemed unsustainable without a reduction in staff.

As Zoe continues to navigate these turbulent waters, the spotlight remains on the critical balance of promoting health-oriented products while ensuring clarity and trust in messaging—a vital consideration for consumers aiming to make informed dietary choices.

Reference Map:

1. Paragraph 1, 2, 4, 5, 6
2. Paragraph 3
3. Paragraph 5, 6
4. Paragraph 5
5. Paragraph 5
6. Paragraph 6
7. Paragraph 6

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/news/health-brand-zoe-rapped-by-asa-over-steven-bartlett-just-real-food-supplement-advert/704691.article> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.asa.org.uk/rulings/zoe-ltd-g24-1241850-zoe-ltd.html> - The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) upheld a complaint against Zoe Ltd for a Facebook ad featuring Steven Bartlett, which omitted his commercial interest in the company. The ad, seen on 26 February 2024, displayed Bartlett with a Zoe patch and a quote stating, 'If you haven’t tried ZOE yet, give it a shot. It might just change your life.' The ASA concluded that the ad was misleading due to the omission of Bartlett's investment in Zoe, breaching CAP Code rules 3.1 and 3.3. Zoe Ltd was instructed not to use the ad in its current form again and to ensure future ads disclose material information regarding commercial relationships. ([asa.org.uk](https://www.asa.org.uk/rulings/zoe-ltd-g24-1241850-zoe-ltd.html?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.itv.com/news/2024-08-14/asa-bans-huel-and-zoe-ads-over-failing-to-disclose-links-to-steven-bartlett> - The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) banned ads for health brands Zoe and Huel featuring Steven Bartlett for failing to disclose his commercial relationship with the entrepreneur. The ads, seen on Facebook in February 2024, omitted material information about Bartlett's links to the brands. Zoe's ad featured Bartlett with a Zoe patch and a quote stating, 'If you haven’t tried Zoe yet, give it a shot. It might just change your life.' The ASA found the ads misleading and instructed both brands not to use them in their current form. ([itv.com](https://www.itv.com/news/2024-08-14/asa-bans-huel-and-zoe-ads-over-failing-to-disclose-links-to-steven-bartlett?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.rpclegal.com/snapshots/advertising-and-marketing/autumn-2024/asa-rules-that-ad-is-not-sufficient-where-influencers-also-have-business-interests/> - In February and March 2024, Steven Bartlett appeared in paid-for Facebook ads for Zoe Ltd and Huel Ltd. The ASA ruled that the ads were misleading due to the omission of material information regarding his business interests in these companies, even though '#ad' disclosures were used. Zoe Ltd's ad featured Bartlett wearing a Zoe patch with a quote stating, 'If you haven't tried ZOE yet, give it a shot. It might just change your life.' The ruling emphasizes the need for explicit disclosure of commercial relationships in influencer marketing. ([rpclegal.com](https://www.rpclegal.com/snapshots/advertising-and-marketing/autumn-2024/asa-rules-that-ad-is-not-sufficient-where-influencers-also-have-business-interests/?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.marketingweek.com/steven-bartlett-huel-zoe-ad-ban/> - Ads for health-focused brands Huel and Zoe featuring entrepreneur Steven Bartlett have been banned by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) for being 'misleading' as they did not disclose Bartlett's stake in each business. Bartlett sits on Huel’s board and has invested in Zoe, but none of the adverts made these facts clear. The ASA found the ads misleading and instructed the brands not to post them in the same format again. ([marketingweek.com](https://www.marketingweek.com/steven-barlett-huel-zoe-ad-ban/?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.prweek.com/article/1885025/steven-bartlett-hit-twice-asa-ad-bans-huel-zoe> - The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) has banned three Facebook ads featuring Steven Bartlett for failing to disclose his commercial involvement with the brands. The ads—one for health app Zoe and two for Huel—did not disclose that Bartlett is an investor in Zoe and a director at Huel. The ASA concluded that the ads were misleading and instructed both brands not to use them in their current form. ([prweek.com](https://www.prweek.com/article/1885025/steven-bartlett-hit-twice-asa-ad-bans-huel-zoe?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/marketing/huel-and-zoe-ads-featuring-steven-bartlett-banned-for-misleading-consumers/694376.article> - Zoe and Huel have had their adverts banned by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) for running 'misleading' ads featuring Steven Bartlett. The ASA ruled that the brands failed to disclose their commercial relationships with Bartlett in paid-for Facebook promotions. Bartlett is an investor in Zoe and a director at Huel, but none of the adverts made these facts clear. The ASA found the ads misleading and instructed both brands not to use them in their current form. ([thegrocer.co.uk](https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/marketing/huel-and-zoe-ads-featuring-steven-bartlett-banned-for-misleading-consumers/694376.article?utm_source=openai))