Direct-to-consumer television marketing of oncology products in the US

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Direct-to-consumer (DTC) advertising has remained a mainstay of healthcare marketing. DTC offers pharmaceutical companies the opportunity to communicate key insights about a medical product or service to a large target audience. Through DTC, these companies can increase awareness about medical products or services while driving a change in consumers¹s behavior. In 2015, pharmaceutical companies spent over 5 billion dollars on advertising.¹

Approximately three-fourths of the 5 billion dollars was spent on advertising through television, while the remainder was spent on other sources such as print and radio.¹ Television advertising is brief (usually 1 minute or shorter) and precludes presentation of detailed information about treatments. Viewers are directed to find out more from external sources (print ads, website, etc.). In an FDA survey, therapy respondents indicated they had seen a drug ad that was personally relevant (usually 1 minute or shorter) and precludes presentation of detailed sources such as print and radio.

Over 5 billion dollars on advertising.¹ Change in consumers' behavior. In 2015, pharmaceutical companies spent over 5 billion dollars on advertising.¹

To determine the tactics and timelines utilized to communicate drug therapy, To evaluate four oncology direct-to-consumer advertising commercials, and to observe over increments of 40% over the duration of the commercial. To determine the tactics and timelines utilized to communicate drug therapy, To evaluate four oncology direct-to-consumer advertising commercials, and to observe over increments of 40% over the duration of the commercial.

Overarching theme for the majority of commercials focused on family and educating patients and encouraging them to talk to their oncologists. In the end, the goal was to increase the market share of these products by educating patients about their conditions and/or treatment options.

Women have to be empowered and confident against their fight. Even while battling cancer, you can continue your normal daily activities.®

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The patient is not alone. You are not alone.®

While you may be strong, your immune system still weakens from chemo. There is a medication to protect yourself further and help your body become stronger.®

Drug while you're strong, your immune system will continue to function. There is a medication to protect yourself further and help your body become stronger.®

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All the commercials were similar in structure and general timeline of the information presented but differed in imagery and message based on target population. Overarching theme for the majority of commercials focused on family and continuing the patients' daily activities besides raloxifene. All imagery in the commercials resonated with the target audience.

Access to proprietary information limited by companies. Unable to determine if increases in dollars spent on DTC advertising for oncology medications correlated with increases in prescriptions or revenue of said medications. Small sample size of oncology commercials. Subjective interpretation of imagery and message presented in commercials.

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