

Botox Assessment

Instead of using a celebrity endorser again, Botox is using real women from different backgrounds and professions to promote Botox for chronic migraines. This particular advertisement appears to be targeting women ages of 21-40. In the case of this ad, the persuader is trying to convince young women that Botox is the ideal and safe way to get rid of migraines. Was the ad convincing enough? Did they provide enough information to back their claim that Botox is the right decision to eliminate or reduce chronic migraines?

The advertisement is in the present tense. Although you aren't seeing women receive a Botox injection or the before-and-after effect (with a migraine and then relief from a migraine. At the 1-second mark, you are presented with a female park ranger walking who then stops, puts her hands on her hips and the voiceover says, "I'm Bad" with the exact same words on the screen. (Allergan, 2021.) At the 2-second mark, another female voiceover says, "you're stronger than you know." At the 3-second mark, you see a female motorcyclist finish her ride and remove her helmet with the same voiceover that says, "So Strong" with the exact same words on the screen. At the 5-second mark, the screen transitions over to a female chef working in the kitchen with the words "Chronic Migraine" on the screen. The same voiceover says, "You power through chronic migraines. 15 or more migraine days a month," (Allergan, 2021). I could tell that Pathos, which is "argument by emotion," (Heinrichs, 2020, pg. 38) was being used to get women pumped up about being tough enough to take control of their chronic migraines which are taking over their lives for half a month.

As the ad continues on, you see a mom holding her child in her arms while carrying groceries and closing the door with her foot at the 9-second mark. The voiceover reads, "One

tough mother” with the words “I’m Tough” on the screen. This statement could be considered an innuendo, which is “make a significant nod,” (Heinrichs, 2020, pg. 195). There is typically a curse word that follows “mother” in slang. At the bottom of the screen, in fine print, you can see the words, “Prescription only. Talk to your doctor or call 1-866-310-4649.” At the 11-second mark, the voiceover says, “You’re bad enough for Botox.” The fine print at the bottom of the screen changes to “Botox prevents on average 8 to 9 headache days and migraine/probable migraine days a month (vs 6 to 7 for placebo),” (Allergan, 2021).

This is where I could tell that the ad was shifting to Logos, which is “argument by logic,” (Heinrichs, 2020, Pg. 37). They were providing statements to back up their claims. The screen transitions to a woman working in a shop at the 12-second mark with a voiceover that says, “Botox has been preventing migraines and headaches before they even start for almost 10 years.” The screen reads, “Proven for chronic migraine for almost 10 years. #1 prescribed branded chronic migraine treatment.” The voiceover continues with, “and is the #1 prescribed branded chronic migraine treatment.” In fine print below this statement, it reads, “Visit BotoxChronicMigraine.com or product and pricing information. FDA approved 2010. Data on File, October 2010 – April 2019,” (Allergan, 2021).

The next screen at the 20-second mark shows a female boxer with the fine print at the bottom that reads, “Botox is not approved for adults with migraine who have 14 or fewer headache days a month,” (Allergan, 2021). This is about the time that we are introduced to Ethos, which is “argument by character, that employs the persuader’s reputation, and ability to look trustworthy,” (Heinrichs, 2020, pg. 38). Botox wants you to know that they have a reputation to uphold and prefer that only women who need this injection receive it. The voiceover continues by saying, “Botox is for adults with chronic migraine. 15 or more headache

days a month each lasting 4 hours or more.” At the 25-second mark, the screen transitions to a woman shopping at the grocery store with her young child. The voiceover changes to a man who says, “Effects of Botox may spread hours to weeks after injection causing serious symptoms.” The fine print at the bottom reads, “Patients with these conditions before injection are at higher risk.” The voiceover continues by saying, “Alert your doctor right away as difficulty swallowing, speaking, breathing, eye problems, or muscle weakness can be signs of a life-threatening condition.” At the 37-second mark, we see a woman working in a chemistry lab with partners. The fine print at the bottom now reads, “Allergic reactions can include rash, welts, asthma symptoms, and dizziness.” The voiceover continues by saying, “Side effects may include allergic reactions, neck and injection site pain, fatigue and headache.” At the 42-second mark, we see a woman showing a model building to male colleagues. The voiceover says, “Don’t receive Botox if there is a skin infection.” The fine print at the bottom now reads, “Including ALS/Lou Gehrig’s disease, myasthenia gravis or Lambert-Eaton syndrome.” The voiceover picks back up by saying, “Tell your doctor your medical history; muscle or nerve conditions and medications, including botulinum toxins as they may increase the risk of serious side effects,” (Allergan, 2021).

The ad shifts to a female firefighter at the 51-second mark with the words, “Go On” on the screen and a female voiceover saying, “Go on with your bad self.” At the 52-second mark, the screen then transitions to a young Caucasian woman with the words, “Find a Botox Specialist. FindaBotoxSpecialist.com.” The same female voiceover says, “Talk to your doctor. Find a Botox specialist nearby at FindaBotoxSpecialist.com.” The screen transitions from the young Caucasian woman to a young African American woman at the 56-second mark. At the 58-second mark, we clearly see the Botox logo front and center with the FindaBotoxSpecialist.com

link. The screen has transitioned to a young Caucasian woman doing pushups who says, “You got this,” (Allergan, 2021.)

“Start by changing its mood, then change its mind, then fill it with the desire to act,” (Heinrichs, 2020, pg. 24). You are changing the mood by women in control of their lives, regardless of if they work in a shop, a kitchen, an office, or if they are even a stay-at-home mom. “If you want your audience to make a choice, focus on the future,” (Heinrichs, 2020, pg. 35). We are focusing on the future, which is a life without chronic migraines. This is also described as “condemning a common enemy (migraines) and giving people a tribal unity,” (Heinrichs, 2020, pg. 27). This tribal unity is female empowerment against migraines.

“To move people away from their current opinion, you need to make them feel comfortable with you,” (Heinrichs, 2020, pg. 49). By showing women of different backgrounds in different professions or life scenarios, which present their own stresses, this allowed viewers to feel like they could relate to Botox users. From what I gathered, inductive reasoning, which is “taking specific cases and using them to prove a premise or conclusion” (Heinrichs, 2020, pg. 139), is present here. You see specific women throughout the ad that you can assume have received Botox injections to relieve migraines. Due to the variety of scenarios shown, we are given the impression that these are just examples and that many more scenarios can apply.

Overall, I would say that this ad is quite well done. While it does show women taking charge of their migraines, the persuader is very honest with their potential consumers. There are many side effects, some life-threatening, and you shouldn’t receive Botox injections if you have specific pre-existing health conditions. Botox doesn’t pretend to be perfect, and it doesn’t give the impression of “one solution for all.” You are frequently instructed to contact your doctor to determine if Botox is right for you. You aren’t provided with bad proof which is classified as

“assuming the lack of examples proves something,” (Heinrichs, 2020, pg. 164). There are many examples of why you should and why you shouldn’t use this product to treat chronic migraines, thus still making way for other options to treat less frequent migraines and allowing your doctor to provide other methods if your medical condition prevents you from getting Botox.

There are no red herrings, “which is when the speaker deliberately brings up an irrelevant issue,” (Heinrichs, 2020, pg. 176), no slippery slopes, which is “if we do a reasonable thing, it will lead to something horrible,” (Heinrichs, 2020, pg. 178), and no straw man tactics, “which ignores the opponent’s argument and sets up a rhetorical straw man – an easier argument to attack,” (Heinrichs, 2020, pg. 177). In addition, there is no hasty generalization, which is a form of misinterpreting the evidence which “takes the exception and claims it proves the rule,” is where you have “too few examples and interprets them broadly,” (Heinrichs, 2020, pg. 181). Lastly, this ad is not tautological, where the “proof and the conclusion are the same.” An example of this is “We won’t have trouble selling this product because it’s easily marketable,” (Heinrichs, 2020, pg. 181). While one may argue that there could be a slippery slope because fear of the potential side effects is present, you are instructed to talk to your doctor several times throughout the ad. This isn’t a magic drug.

It doesn’t apply to all female migraine sufferers due to variances in health conditions. They aren’t taking the easy way out. The need to include disclaimers make it a little more difficult to market, but it definitely helps with ethos (aka “credibility.”) The only issue that I find with these kinds of solutions is that one of the side effects is “headache” at the 40-second mark (Allergan, 2021). If you are trying to get rid of headaches, why would you want to receive a treatment that can cause headaches? Outside of that, I think this is a pretty solid ad that would convince me, a migraine sufferer, to contact my doctor and see if this treatment is right for me.

Works Cited:

Allergan. (2021). *BOTOX Commercial, 'Strong'* [Television commercial]. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7GwlpjZqxI>

Heinrichs, J. (2020). *Thank you for arguing. What Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson can reach us about the art of persuasion*. Random House, NY.

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