

## Beauty centres are not that beautiful after all

Written by

Tuesday, 16 August 2016 16:17 - Last Updated Tuesday, 16 August 2016 16:20

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In 2014, according to the National Consumer Complaints Centre (NCCC), the number of complaints under wellness and aesthetics sector were 1,359, with losses amounting to over RM1 million. More worrying is that in 2015, the complaints under this sector has increased to 1,848 with losses close to RM6 million. On a daily basis, consumers are bombarded with advertisement inviting them to use products and undergo treatment that would make them beautiful. Becoming beautiful can be terribly expensive nowadays, in which consumers are willing to fork out thousands of dollars to achieve it. Unfortunately the results did not turn out the way they expected it to be. There has been a rise in the number of complaints according to the National Consumer Complaints Centre in recent years over beauty centres and the common types of complaints received are usually sales personnel using aggressive sales tactic, undue pressure to the complainants to sign up for the treatments despite the fact that the complainant didn't want to and or needed more time to think about it. Difficulties in obtaining refunds upon terminating the contract is very common and despite stating the fact that the complainant could not proceed with the treatment due to allergic or other more serious problem, the company does not wish to negotiate further. Often, consumers claim that the beauty consultants are very convincing in trying to sell their products to the extent of allowing them to think that their skin was actually getting better and giving false statement to boost their self-esteem.

However in reality, some of the products as claimed by the complainants have caused allergic reaction to their skin and did not show any improvements even after months of using their products. There were cases whereby the branch has closed down without informing their existing consumers, causing the complainant to be terribly upset, apart from monetary loss. The bigger responsibility is on the regulators that should monitor the wellness centre activity(ies) and do regular inspection upon receiving complaints over the beauty centre and to take proper action against aggressive sales tactics. However, NCCC strongly believes that the public play an important role and urge consumers to be aware and to think twice before signing up for any treatment/procedure as unlicensed treatments can be dangerous and hazardous to health. Here are some tips to avoid being scammed:

1. Learn to say NO. You can't buy a product just to please anyone or feeling fear of offending. If you need time to think about it, then say no in a polite manner and be firm about it.
2. Make sure to check the background of the company. Whether they are registered and licensed before they could carry out any procedure. Whether the company is registered, you may contact the Companies Commission of Malaysia (CCM).
3. Before signing up for any sort of treatment, consumers must read the terms and conditions of the contract. Consumer should never sign a contract without reading, sign any blank paper or give out their credit card details.
4. Do consult with friends and family before deciding, and use your own judgment to make your own decision and should not be fooled by some selling methods used by the sales personal.
5. Do lodge a complaint immediately upon any misconduct done by the centre.

If you are facing the same problem or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact NCCC at [myaduan@nccc.org.my](mailto:myaduan@nccc.org.my) / 03-78769000 or [shabana.naseer@nccc.org.my](mailto:shabana.naseer@nccc.org.my) SHABANA NASEER is legal and policy executive, Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations (Fomca)/National Consumer Complaints Centre (NCCC).

Source: Malaysiakini/16 August 2016