

## ***Virtual Mentor***

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### **CASE AND COMMENTARY**

#### **Selling Health-Related Products from the Office or Clinic**

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#### **Case**

Dr. Johnson practices dermatology and sees a number of patients with acne. In serious cases, she prescribes certain kinds of medications. For mild cases of acne, she sells skin cleansing products that she herself has developed. Based on personal observation, she believes that her skin cleansing products produce significant improvement in her patients' skin. Her patients are also true believers in her products and gladly pay \$100 for a 3 months' supply. Prominent ads that tout the benefits of using her products are displayed in her office. Convinced that her products play a small but important role in her patients' care, Dr. Johnson sees nothing wrong with selling them directly to her patients.

#### **Questions for Discussion**

1. Do you agree with Dr. Johnson?
2. Should she disclose her financial stake in these products to her patients?

See what the AMA *Code of Medical Ethics* says about this topic in Opinion 8.063 Sale of health-related products from physicians' office. *American Medical Association. Code of Medical Ethics 1998-1999. Edition.* Chicago, IL: American Medical Association; 1998.

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