

1 WASSERMAN, COMDEN & CASSELMAN LLP  
Melissa M. Harnett (SBN 164309) (mharnett@wcclaw.com)  
2 5567 Reseda Boulevard, Suite 330  
Post Office Box 7033  
3 Tarzana, CA 91357-7033  
Telephone: 818-705-6800  
4 Telecopier: 818-705-8927

5 FAZIO | MICHELETTI LLP  
Jeffrey L. Fazio (SBN 146043) (jlf@fazmiclaw.com)  
6 Dina E. Micheletti (SBN 184141) (dem@fazmiclaw.com)  
2410 Camino Ramon, Suite 315  
7 San Ramon, CA 94583  
Telephone: 925-543-2555  
8 Telecopier: 925-369-0344

9 CENTER FOR SCIENCE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST  
Stephen Gardner (*pro hac vice*) (sgardner@cspi.net)  
10 The Meadows Building  
5646 Milton Street, Suite 211  
11 Dallas, Texas 75206  
Telephone: 214-827-2774  
12 Telecopier: 214-827-2787

13 Attorneys for Plaintiff  
David Wilson, on behalf of himself  
14 and all others similarly situated

15  
16 SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

17 COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

18 DAVID WILSON, on behalf of himself and all  
19 others similarly situated,

20 Plaintiff,

21 vs.

22 AIRBORNE, INC., AIRBORNE HEALTH,  
23 INC., KNIGHT-MCDOWELL LABS, THOMAS  
24 "RIDER" MCDOWELL, VICTORIA KNIGHT-  
MCDOWELL, and DOES 1-100, inclusive,

25 Defendants.  
26  
27  
28

No. RCV RS095262

**CLASS ACTION**

**SECOND AMENDED COMPLAINT FOR  
DAMAGES AND EQUITABLE RELIEF**

**JURY TRIAL DEMANDED**

1 Plaintiff, David Wilson, individually and on behalf of others similarly situated, brings this  
2 action against Defendants Airborne, Inc., Airborne Health, Inc., Knight-McDowell Labs, Thomas  
3 “Rider” McDowell, Victoria Knight-McDowell, and Does 1 through 100, demanding a trial by jury,  
4 and alleges as follows:

5  
6 **SUMMARY OF COMPLAINT**

7 1. This action is based on a very simple premise that has worked a massive fraud on  
8 American consumers: According to Defendants, a second-grade schoolteacher became “sick of  
9 catching colds in the classroom,” so she invented Airborne, a product Defendants claim not only  
10 cures colds if taken at the onset of cold symptoms, but prevents colds if the product is taken before  
11 entering crowded environments where “germs” are likely to exist (such as class rooms, airplanes,  
12 movie theaters, etc.). The schoolteacher and her Hollywood script-writer husband then put together  
13 a “laboratory” that hired two individuals to conduct a “clinical study” of the remedy, which  
14 concluded that it really was the “Miracle Cold Buster” that they told consumers it was. The  
15 schoolteacher’s husband then used his background in television scriptwriting to garner  
16 endorsements of celebrities, and the schoolteacher was interviewed by Oprah Winfrey.

17  
18 2. The effort worked spectacularly well. Airborne became phenomenally popular, and  
19 rocketed to a position of market dominance as consumers spent hundreds of millions of dollars on  
20 it. And the investment company that purchased a majority interest in Airborne recently put it up for  
21 sale. The price tag: \$1 billion. *See, e.g.,* <http://biz.yahoo.com/ic/155/155280.html>.

22  
23 3. The problem with all this is that there is no cure for the common cold, and Airborne  
24 is not a “Miracle Cold Buster” that cures colds, or prevents a cold from developing if the product is  
25 consumed immediately before boarding a plane, entering a crowded room, or otherwise exposing  
26 themselves to others who already have a cold. To the contrary, Airborne is simply another in a long  
27 line of “snake oil” scams that prey on consumers’ naiveté and their hope for a simple cure to a  
28 common, but very pervasive, problem that does not exist.

1           4.       The purpose of this action is to put a stop to the false statements that persuaded  
2 consumers to part with their money; to provide warnings about the serious health problems — such  
3 as irreversible liver disease, birth defects, kidney damage and kidney stones — that can occur when  
4 Airborne is consumed as directed; and to provide consumers with monetary relief for Defendants’  
5 unjust enrichment and violations of the Unfair Competition Law (“UCL”), Bus. & Prof. Code §§  
6 17200-17209, the False Advertising Law (“FAL”), Bus. & Prof. Code §§ 17500-17536, the  
7 Consumers Legal Remedies Act (“CLRA”), Civ. Code §§ 1750-1784.

8  
9           5.       Airborne’s actions also violate the California’s Sherman Food, Drug, and Cosmetic  
10 Act, California Health & Safety Code §§ 108975-111915 (“Sherman Law”). Every Airborne  
11 product is “misbranded” if its labeling is “*false or misleading in any particular.*” *Id.* §§ 110660 &  
12 111330. “In determining whether the labeling or advertisement of a food, drug, device, or cosmetic  
13 is misleading, all representations made or suggested by statement, word, *design, device*, sound, or  
14 any combination of these, shall be taken into account. The extent that the labeling or advertising  
15 *fails to reveal facts* concerning the food, drug, device, or cosmetic or consequences of customary  
16 use of the food, drug, device, or cosmetic shall also be considered.” *Id.* § 110290 (emphasis added).  
17 It is a violation of the Sherman Law for any person to (1) misbrand any food or drug, *id.* §§ 10398  
18 & 111445; (2) manufacture, sell, deliver, hold, or offer for sale any food or drug that is misbranded,  
19 *id.* §§ 10398 & 111440; or (3) receive in commerce any food or drug that is misbranded, or deliver  
20 or proffer it for delivery, *id.* §§ 110770 & 111450. The violations of the UCL, FAL, and CLRA are  
21 the equivalent of “misbranding” under the Sherman Law.

22  
23           6.       As described more fully below, Plaintiff alleges that Defendants violated the  
24 foregoing statutes by making false and misleading statements on (a) Airborne packages, copies of  
25 which are attached hereto as Exhibit A, and (b) on Airborne’s website, each iteration of which is  
26 attached hereto as Exhibit B.



1           11. Plaintiff is informed and believes and on that basis alleges that on December 22,  
2 2005, Airborne, Inc., merged with and into Airborne Health, Inc., a newly-formed Delaware  
3 corporation. The name Airborne, Inc., was thereafter utilized by Airborne Health, Inc., as a d/b/a.  
4 Airborne Health, Inc., succeeded to the same employer identification number that Airborne, Inc.,  
5 had prior to the merger. Airborne Health, Inc., registered to transact business under the name of  
6 Airborne, Inc., in California on January 12, 2006, and in Florida on January 11, 2006. Defendant  
7 Airborne Health, Inc., now serves as the wholesale distributor of the Airborne product line, and  
8 maintains offices in Bonita Springs, Florida; Parsippany, New Jersey; and Carmel, California.  
9 (Defendants Airborne, Inc., and Airborne Health, Inc., are sometimes referred to herein collectively  
10 as the “Corporate Defendants.”)  
11

12           12. Plaintiff is informed and believes and on that basis alleges that Defendant Knight-  
13 McDowell Labs is an unincorporated business entity that Plaintiff is informed and believes was  
14 formed and originally owned by Defendant Thomas “Rider” McDowell and is now owned by  
15 Defendant Airborne Health, Inc., which has used the name since January, 2006.  
16

17           13. Plaintiff is informed and believes and on that basis alleges that Defendant Thomas  
18 McDowell, also known as “Rider” McDowell, is an individual residing in Monterey County,  
19 California.  
20

21           14. Plaintiff is informed and believes and on that basis alleges that Defendant Victoria  
22 Knight-McDowell is an individual residing in Monterey County, California.  
23

24           15. Defendants, and each of them, are authorized to do business in California, have  
25 sufficient minimum contacts with California, and/or otherwise have intentionally availed  
26 themselves of the markets in California through the promotion, marketing and sale of their products  
27 in California, to render the exercise of jurisdiction by this Court permissible under traditional  
28 notions of fair play and substantial justice.



1 had their principal place of business in Monterey County, California — from which the unlawful  
2 conduct alleged herein emanated.

3  
4 **GENERAL ALLEGATIONS**

5  
6 20. Each of the Defendants named in this action have played a role in the unlawful,  
7 fraudulent, and unfair business practices that underlie this lawsuit.

8  
9 21. Airborne is the brainchild of a second-grade school teacher, Defendant Victoria-  
10 Knight McDowell, and her husband, Defendant Rider McDowell, an aspiring screenwriter and  
11 comic-book author. Plaintiff is informed and believes that, in 1997, the school teacher and her  
12 husband set up shop in the kitchen of their Carmel Valley, California, home and began concocting a  
13 product that they hoped would net them a piece of the multi-billion dollar supplement market. That  
14 product is Airborne.

15  
16 22. Although the Airborne tablets themselves are nothing more than multi-vitamins  
17 mixed with herbs and amino acids, Defendants began marketing and selling Airborne as a cold  
18 “remedy,” a “miracle cold buster,” and as a product that will prevent the user from catching a cold  
19 in the first place if taken before entering crowded environments where germs are most likely to be  
20 present (such as classrooms, airplanes, movie theaters, etc.)

21  
22 23. From the inception of this product, Defendants have employed deceptive tactics to  
23 promote Airborne. For example, Plaintiff is informed and believes that, to trick their first few retail  
24 customers into believing Airborne was actually selling, the Individual Defendants would take turns  
25 buying up the product themselves. Later, Plaintiff is informed and believes that the Individual  
26 Defendants formed Defendant Knight-McDowell Labs for the purpose of making it seem as though  
27 there was scientific support for the notion that Airborne could actually prevent and cure the  
28 common cold. Today, Defendants insist that retailers who wish to carry their hot selling product

1 display Airborne in the “cough and cold” aisle, alongside bona fide drugs and medicines — not in  
2 the supplement aisle.

3  
4 24. While Defendant Knight-McDowell relied heavily on her folksy charm to push  
5 Defendants’ self-proclaimed miracle cold remedy (according to statements on Airborne packaging,  
6 she claims to have invented Airborne because she was “sick of catching colds in the classroom”),  
7 her husband utilized his experience as a screenwriter to develop a very successful ad campaign.  
8 Airborne’s ads make use of the likeable second-grade teacher (Defendant Knight-McDowell),  
9 cartoonish “germs,” and a string of paid celebrities to tout the product’s ability to prevent or cure  
10 colds.

11  
12 25. Defendant Knight-McDowell promoted Airborne by appearing on the Oprah  
13 Winfrey show in or about September 2004, where she claimed that she was inspired to begin selling  
14 Airborne because she had given it to friends and family and they had stopped getting sick. Plaintiff  
15 is informed and believes that product sales increased substantially after the show featuring  
16 Defendant Knight-McDowell aired. A synopsis describing Defendant Knight-McDowell continues  
17 to appear on the Oprah website:

18  
19 As a teacher and a mother, Victoria found herself catching colds all the time. In her  
20 spare time, Victoria took to her kitchen to wage war on the common cold. Within  
21 six months she had created the prototype for Airborne, her all-natural cold fighter.  
22 Her friends and family started using it and Victoria says no one was getting sick. So  
23 she and her husband set up shop in their home and began to market Airborne. The  
24 accounting office was in the dining room, one of the bedrooms was the marketing  
25 office and the bathroom was shipping and receiving! The orders started pouring in  
26 and in the first year, Victoria made \$25,000—the same as her teaching salary.

27 [http://www.oprah.com/tows/slide/200409/20040930/slide\\_20040930\\_202.jhtml](http://www.oprah.com/tows/slide/200409/20040930/slide_20040930_202.jhtml).

28 26. Airborne’s advertising campaign has been phenomenally successful: As a result of  
29 Defendant’s efforts, Airborne is purportedly the number-one selling “cold and flu remedy” sold by

1 Drugstore.com and is, according to Defendants, the “#1 natural cold remedy in the U.S.,” and one  
2 of the “fastest selling products in retail history.”

3  
4 27. The Airborne sales campaign is, and always has been, deceptively simple and  
5 straightforward: Airborne is sold as a “natural cold remedy” that prevents and cures colds. For  
6 example, Airborne entices consumers to purchase the Remedy by asking the rhetorical question  
7 “Sick of Catching Colds? Take Airborne.” In ads and on the Airborne boxes themselves, a smiling  
8 Defendant Knight-McDowell tells consumers she invented Airborne specifically because she was  
9 “sick of catching colds in the classroom.” *E.g.*, Ex. A at 3. The Airborne Health website  
10 elaborates:

11  
12 Victoria Knight-McDowell, an elementary school teacher who was sick of catching  
13 colds in class and on airplanes, spent over five years developing AIRBORNE with a  
14 team of health professionals. During the product’s development process, TEAM  
15 Airborne determined that by combining seven Chinese herbs\* (each with a specific  
16 function in Eastern medicine) then putting them through a patented extraction  
17 process, and THEN combining them with a unique formulation of amino acids, anti-  
18 oxidants and electrolytes, they created a product that helped support and protect  
19 immune system function against airborne germs and viruses, hence AIRBORNE was  
20 born. [*Clinical pharmacology for AIRBORNE herbal constituents reported  
21 respectively in, Materia Medica, Pharmacology And Applications of Chinese  
22 Materia Medica, Encyclopedia of Common Natural Ingredients Used In Food,  
23 Drugs, and Cosmetics.*] They used an effervescent carrier, as a way to deliver the  
24 nutritional benefits of AIRBORNE to the system immediately, and without the bulk.  
25 There’s nothing else like it!

26 Ex. B at 19.

27 28. According to Defendants, all a consumer need do to stave off a cold — either after a  
28 cold has begun to produce symptoms, or to prevent one as a result of exposure to others — is to  
take the Product “at the first sign of a cold symptom, or before entering crowded environments, like  
airplanes or offices.” Plaintiff is also informed and believes that Defendants “talking points,”  
which they use in conjunction with third-party advertisers to promote their product include claims  
that each Airborne tablet provides “3 hours of protection against the common cold” or “30 Hours of  
herbal and vitamin support per tube.”

1           29.     Airborne’s purported ability to prevent a cold so soon after consuming it is explained  
2 on the package, which states that its “effervescent technology offers 100% immediate absorption.”  
3 *E.g.*, Ex. A at 3, 6, 9. In other words, with respect to their marketing of Airborne as a shield against  
4 exposure to the cold virus in a crowded environment, Plaintiff is also informed and believes that the  
5 purpose of proclaiming that Airborne’s ingredients will be “absorbed” immediately is to explain  
6 how Airborne can prevent the user from catching a cold simply by taking it before entering into  
7 “crowded environments.” Toward the same end, Airborne added Airborne “On the Go” to its  
8 product line, contributing to the illusion that Airborne will protect against colds even if taken just  
9 prior to entering crowded environments. *See* Ex. B at 54. To the extent that consumers had any  
10 doubts about these claims, Airborne attempted to allay them by stating on the Product’s package  
11 that “Clinical Trial data is available at [www.airbornehealth.com](http://www.airbornehealth.com).” Ex. A at 3.  
12

13           30.     Defendants have claimed that this “Clinical Trial data” was the product of a double-  
14 blind, placebo-controlled study (the “Clinical Study”) that was commissioned by Defendant Knight-  
15 McDowell Labs and conducted in 2003 by a company that supposedly specializes in clinical trial  
16 management, GNG Pharmaceutical Services. Plaintiff is informed, however, that the Clinical Study  
17 was actually conducted by two individuals hired by Defendants; that these individuals are neither  
18 scientists nor physicians; that the Clinical Study was not conducted in a clinic. Even Defendants  
19 have admitted that the Clinical Study “confused consumers.”  
20

21           31.     Until recently, however, Defendants continued to refer to the Clinical Study on  
22 Airborne’s website and on the Product’s packaging. Defendants also continued to claim that 47  
23 percent of the participants in the clinical trial had their symptoms disappear or nearly disappear  
24 after taking Airborne for five days. *See generally* Ex. B at 14-15. Nonetheless, Defendant  
25 Airborne Health, Inc., continued to insist that the Clinical Study was valid, stating that “[t]he 2003  
26 trial was a small study conducted for what was then a small company. ***While it yielded very strong***  
27 ***results***, we feel that the methodology (protocol) employed is not consistent with our current product  
28

1 usage recommendations. Therefore, we no longer make it available to the public.” (Emphasis  
2 added.)

3  
4 32. Defendants’ claims about Airborne are patently false. The school teacher and the  
5 Hollywood screenwriter did not actually invent a cure for the common cold: Again, the tablets  
6 themselves are nothing more than a multi-vitamin tablet, combined with a few minerals, amino  
7 acids and some herbs.

8  
9 33. Consumers spend nearly \$3 billion a year on medications to treat colds, and  
10 Airborne has capitalized on consumers’ vulnerability to promises that an over-the-counter product  
11 can immunize them from catching a cold, and to cure it if they already have one. But Airborne does  
12 neither. To the contrary, experts have said that “simply washing your hands during cold and flu  
13 season is a much more effective way of preventing colds.” Nonetheless, Defendants have made  
14 millions of dollars by making false representations to consumers about Airborne, and they continue  
15 to make millions through false advertising to this day.

16  
17 34. Defendants promoted, advertised and sold Airborne products on the Airborne Health  
18 website and in *the cold and cough medication aisle* of large retail outlets (such as Long’s Drugs,  
19 CVS Pharmacies, Costco, Sam’s Club, Walgreen’s, and other large retailers). *See, e.g.*, Ex. B at 3,  
20 6, 80. Plaintiff is informed and believes that the Corporate Defendants are now primarily  
21 responsible for promoting, advertising, distributing, and selling the Airborne line of products.  
22 Plaintiff is also informed and believes, however, that until late-2005 the Individual Defendants have  
23 manipulated and controlled Defendant Airborne, Inc.’s assets for their personal use and profit,  
24 thereby treating it as their alter ego rather than a separate entity, and that the Individual Defendants  
25 — individually and through Defendant Knight-McDowell Labs — were primarily and individually  
26 responsible for promoting advertising, distributing and selling the Airborne line of products until  
27 that time.

28



1           38. The front of the package enumerates the locations in which it was purportedly  
2 designed to be used, stating that Airborne is intended “FOR USE IN: ► Airplanes ► Offices ►  
3 Schools ► Restaurants ► Health Clubs ► Theaters . . . .” *E.g.*, Ex. A at 3. The same message is  
4 included in the usage instructions: “DIRECTIONS: AT THE **FIRST** SIGN OF A COLD  
5 SYMPTOM, SIMPLY DROP (1) AIRBORNE TABLET IN A SMALL AMOUNT OF PLAIN  
6 WATER, LET DISSOLVE ABOUT (1) MINUTE AND DRINK.\* REPEAT EVERY THREE  
7 HOURS AS NECESSARY.” *Id.* (emphasis in original).

8  
9           39. Plaintiff is informed and believes that the only way a so-called “dietary supplement”  
10 could be designed for use in airplanes, offices, schools, restaurants, and other places where people  
11 with colds are likely to congregate is if the “supplement” somehow immunized those who  
12 consumed it from the “germs” that those people are carrying. Moreover, because consumers are  
13 instructed to take Airborne at the “first sign” a cold has begun to materialize, consumers are led to  
14 believe that Airborne is a remedy with therapeutic value, and not merely a supplement that should  
15 be taken as a preventative, immune system booster.

16  
17           40. The supposed importance of taking the product in a timely manner is further  
18 underscored by another claim that appears on each package: That “effervescent technology offers  
19 100% immediate absorption.” *E.g.*, Ex. A at 3. Plaintiff is informed and believes that Airborne is  
20 **not** 100% absorbed **immediately** into the blood stream, and that the true reason for this statement is  
21 to mislead consumers into believing that “immediate” absorption will prevent a cold when taken  
22 just before going to a crowded place.

23  
24           41. Plaintiff is also informed and believe that Airborne does **not** “immediately” boost the  
25 consumers’ immune system or prevent the consumer from contracting a cold in a crowded area  
26 because (1) Airborne’s ingredients are not immediately absorbed into the bloodstream; (2) Airborne  
27 does not immediately boost the immune system in a manner that will ward off a cold — in a  
28

1 crowded area or anywhere else; and (3) Airborne cannot prevent a consumer from contracting a  
2 cold in a crowded area if taken pursuant to the directions.

3  
4 42. Another misleading message appears in the usage instructions: By stating that  
5 Airborne should be taken “every three hours as necessary,” the package creates the potential for  
6 overdoses of vitamins C and A, which can lead to serious side effects. One tablet of Airborne  
7 contains one gram of vitamin C. *See* Ex. A at 3. Plaintiff is informed and believes that Vitamin C  
8 in doses higher than one gram increases oxalate and urate excretion, which can cause kidney stones  
9 and severe diarrhea. Thus, by recommending that consumers take three times that amount — and  
10 more “as necessary” — the packaging creates a dangerously misleading notion that such high doses  
11 are actually beneficial.

12  
13 43. Even more potentially dangerous is the amount of vitamin A contained in Airborne.  
14 A single tablet contains 5,000 international units of vitamin A per serving, and the recommended  
15 safe upper limit for vitamin A is 10,000 international units daily. Thus, taking Airborne three times  
16 a day will cause consumers to consume 15,000 international units, and far more if they continue to  
17 take it throughout the day and night “as necessary” per the instructions on the package. Plaintiff is  
18 informed and believes that consuming Airborne as directed on the package can create serious health  
19 issues — such as birth defects, liver abnormalities, and osteoporosis.

20  
21 44. On the back of the package, immediately following statements recommending that  
22 Airborne be taken at the first sign of a cold or when entering crowded environments is a reference  
23 to “Clinical Trial data” that is available on the Airborne Health website ([www.airbornehealth.com](http://www.airbornehealth.com)).  
24 *See* Ex. A at 3. Plaintiff is informed and believe that, contrary to the ostensible support suggested  
25 by the reference on Airborne packaging, the so-called “Clinical Study” was neither independent nor  
26 legitimate in any way.



1           48.     After touting the “Clinical Trial” on packages of Airborne and in advertisements for  
2 years, all references to it were suddenly removed from Airborne packages and ads, and the results  
3 were no longer made available on the Airborne Health website.

4  
5           49.     In that report, ABC News revealed that the “Clinical Trial” was paid for by  
6 Defendant Knight-McDowell Labs; that GNG Pharmaceutical Services had no clinic, no scientists,  
7 and no doctors in its employ; that GNG Pharmaceutical Service’s entire “staff” was composed of  
8 the two men who had formed GNG for the sole and specific purpose of performing the “Clinical  
9 Trial” for Defendant Knight-McDowell Labs.

10  
11           50.     Several months after this lawsuit was filed — three years after the “Clinical Trial”  
12 was conducted — Plaintiff is informed and believes that requests for copies of it were denied.

13  
14           51.     The Airborne Health website contained a number of other false and misleading  
15 statements about Airborne as well, such as characterizing it as a “Natural Cold Remedy,” a  
16 “Miracle Cold Buster,” an “awesome cold remedy,” and by telling consumers that Airborne “wards  
17 the cold off within hours” and when a cold starts, “it wipes it out. This product works!” *See, e.g.,*  
18 Ex. B at 3, 24-25.

19  
20           52.     The website also stated that Airborne’s “herbal” formula is actually more effective  
21 than pharmaceutical remedies:

22           Some of the formulas have been used for at least two thousand years. There is a  
23 Chinese medicine text called the Nei Ching that was first written out in about 200  
24 a.d. It contains formulas that are still used effectively for infections today. This  
25 “resistance to resistance” of Chinese herbal formulas is probably because there are  
26 several herbs in each formula and each herb has many complex plant alkaloids. ***This***  
27 ***complexity is just too much for the “bugs” to process. It is much easier for them***  
***to adapt and “outwit” the simpler “one item” pharmaceuticals. Traditional herbal***  
***medicines may soon be our only weapon against bacteria, like staphylococcus—***  
***“staph”—that are fast becoming resistant to all antibiotics!***

28 Ex. B at 20 (emphasis added).



1 package, Airborne did not prevent Plaintiff Wilson from catching a cold and did nothing to hasten  
2 his recovery from his cold after he caught it.

3  
4 **CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS**

5 57. Plaintiff brings this class action pursuant to the provisions of California Code of  
6 Civil Procedure section 382 and California Civil Code section 1781, on behalf of himself and all  
7 other persons similarly situated.

8  
9 58. The class that Plaintiff seeks to represent is defined as follows: All persons who  
10 purchased Airborne while residing in the United States, from May 17, 2002, to the present. The  
11 proposed class includes a subclass, comprising all class members who are “consumers” within the  
12 meaning of California Civil Code section 1761(d) (the “CLRA subclass”).

13  
14 59. Excluded from the class are Defendants, their subsidiaries and affiliates, officers,  
15 directors, and employees; persons who have suffered physical injury that was proximately caused  
16 by Airborne; and persons who have settled with and validly released Defendants from separate,  
17 non-class legal actions against Defendants based on the conduct alleged herein.

18  
19 60. Plaintiff is informed and believes that millions of consumers purchased Airborne  
20 within the United States during the four years prior to the filing of the initial complaint in this  
21 action to the present. The class is, therefore, so numerous and geographically dispersed that joinder  
22 of all members in one action is impracticable.

23  
24 61. Defendants have acted with respect to Plaintiff and members of the proposed class in  
25 a manner generally applicable to each of them. There is a well-defined community of interest in the  
26 questions of law and fact involved, which affect all class members. The questions of law and fact  
27 common to the class predominate over the questions that may affect individual class members,  
28 including the following:

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- a. whether Airborne can prevent a person from catching a cold;
- b. whether Airborne can prevent a person from catching a cold if consumed shortly before (*i.e.*, within several hours of) entering into a crowded environment;
- c. whether Airborne can hasten a person’s recovery from a cold if Airborne is consumed at the “first sign” of a cold;
- d. whether consuming Airborne in accordance with the usage instructions on the Airborne package can cause serious health problems;
- e. whether Airborne’s ingredients are immediately absorbed into a person’s bloodstream in a manner that would enable Airborne to prevent a person from catching a cold in a crowded environment;
- f. whether Airborne’s ingredients are immediately absorbed into a person’s bloodstream in a manner that would enable Airborne to hasten the recovery from a cold;
- g. whether Defendants represented on Airborne’s packaging that Airborne had a characteristics, ingredients, uses, or benefits that it does not have, in violation of Civil Code section 1770(a)(5);
- h. whether Defendants represented on Airborne’s packaging that Airborne is of a particular standard, quality, or grade that it is not, in violation of Civil Code section 1770(a)(7);

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- i. whether Defendants advertised Airborne with the intent not to sell it as advertised in violation of Civil Code section 1770(a)(9);
- j. whether the representations on Airborne packaging constitute a drug or disease claim or otherwise violate the Sherman Law;
- k. whether Defendants are subject to liability for violating the Consumers Legal Remedies Act (“CLRA”), Civ. Code §§ 1750-1784;
- n. whether Defendants have violated the Unfair Competition Law, Bus. & Prof. Code §§ 17200-17209;
- o. whether Defendants have violated the False Advertising Law (“FAL”), Bus. & Prof. Code §§ 17500-17536;
- p. whether the CLRA subclass is entitled to an award of compensatory damages pursuant to Civil Code section 1780(a)(1);
- q. whether the CLRA subclass is entitled to an award of statutory damages pursuant to Civil Code section 1780(a)(1);
- r. whether the CLRA subclass is entitled to an award of restitution pursuant to Civil Code section 1780(a)(3);
- s. whether the CLRA subclass is entitled to an award of punitive damages pursuant to Civil Code section 1780(a)(4);

1 t. whether Defendants have been unjustly enriched as a result of the unlawful,  
2 fraudulent, and unfair conduct alleged in this Complaint, such that it would  
3 be inequitable for Defendants to retain the benefits conferred upon them by  
4 Plaintiff and the proposed class; and

5  
6 u. whether the class is entitled to an award of restitution pursuant to Business &  
7 Professions Code section 17203.  
8

9 62. Plaintiff's claims are typical of the claims of all proposed class members.  
10

11 63. Plaintiff will fairly and adequately represent and protect the interests of the proposed  
12 class, and does not have interests that are antagonistic to or in conflict with those he seeks to  
13 represent.  
14

15 64. Plaintiff has retained counsel who have considerable experience in the prosecution  
16 of class actions and other forms of complex litigation.  
17

18 65. In view of the complexity of the issues and the expense that an individual plaintiff  
19 would incur if he or she attempted to obtain relief from a large corporation such as those that have  
20 been named as Defendants in this action, the separate claims of individual class members are  
21 monetarily insufficient to support separate actions. Because of the size of the individual class  
22 members' claims, few, if any, class members could afford to seek legal redress for the wrongs  
23 complained of in this Complaint.  
24

25 66. The proposed class is readily definable, and prosecution of Plaintiff's claims as a  
26 class action will eliminate the possibility of repetitious litigation and will provide redress for claims  
27 too small to support the expense of individual, complex litigation. Absent a class action, class  
28 members will continue to suffer losses, Defendant's violations of law will be allowed to proceed

1 without a full, fair, judicially supervised remedy, and Defendants will retain sums received as a  
2 result of its wrongdoing. A class action therefore provides a fair and efficient method for  
3 adjudicating this controversy.

4  
5 67. The prosecution of separate claims by individual class members would create a risk  
6 of inconsistent or varying adjudications with respect to thousands of individual class members,  
7 which would, as a practical matter, dispose of the interests of the class members not parties to those  
8 separate actions or would substantially impair or impede their ability to protect their interests and  
9 enforce their rights.

10  
11 68. The proposed class and CLRA subclass satisfy the certification criteria applicable to  
12 this action, including California Code of Civil Procedure section 382 and California Civil Code  
13 section 1781 and the cases construing and applying those statutes.

14  
15 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

16 **DECLARATORY RELIEF**

17 (All Defendants)

18  
19 69. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference the allegations set forth in each of  
20 the preceding paragraphs of this Complaint.

21  
22 70. Pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure section 1060, Plaintiff seeks a  
23 declaration of the respective rights and duties of the parties. As alleged in Paragraphs 10-12, 21-26,  
24 and 34-35 of this Complaint, Plaintiff contends that a unity of interest in ownership has existed and  
25 now exists between the Individual Defendants and Defendant Airborne, Inc., such that, to the extent  
26 any individuality and separateness ever existed between the Individual Defendants and Defendant  
27 Airborne, Inc., it has ceased, rendering Defendant Airborne, Inc., the alter ego of the Individual  
28 Defendants at all times relevant to the subject matter of this Complaint.

1           71. Defendants deny these allegations. Therefore, an actual controversy has arisen and  
2 now exists between Defendants and Plaintiff and the class he proposes to represent in this action.  
3 Accordingly, Plaintiff hereby requests a judicial declaration that adherence to the fiction of  
4 Defendant Airborne, Inc.'s existence as an entity separate and distinct from the Individual  
5 Defendants would permit an abuse of the corporate privilege and would promote fraud and injustice  
6 for the following reasons:

- 7
- 8           a. that from in or about 1997 to December 2005, the Individual Defendants have  
9           manipulated and controlled the Defendant Airborne, Inc.'s assets for their personal  
10           use and profit, thereby treating Defendant Airborne, Inc., as their alter ego rather  
11           than a separate entity;
  - 12
  - 13           b. that from in or about 1997 to December 2005, the Individual Defendants have used  
14           Defendant Airborne, Inc., as a device to avoid individual liability for the fraudulent  
15           conduct described in this Complaint; and
  - 16
  - 17           c. that from its inception until December 2005, Defendant Airborne, Inc., and the  
18           Individual Defendants failed to maintain an arm's-length relationship with  
19           Defendant Airborne, Inc.; rather, the Individual Defendants have exercised complete  
20           control and dominance of Defendant Airborne, Inc., to an extent that any  
21           individuality or separateness of Defendant Airborne, Inc., and the Individual  
22           Defendants did not and does not exist, thus rendering Defendant Airborne, Inc., a  
23           mere shell, instrumentality and conduit by which the Individual Defendants carried  
24           out their plan to defraud Plaintiff and the proposed class.

25

26           72. Plaintiff desires a judicial declaration of the rights and duties of Plaintiff and the  
27 proposed class and the Defendants with respect to each of the foregoing issues in controversy.  
28 Such a declaration is necessary and appropriate at this time for Plaintiff and the proposed class to

1 ascertain their rights and duties under the law, and to determine whether Defendant Airborne, Inc.'s  
2 corporate status should insulate the Individual Defendants from personal liability in this action.

3  
4 **SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION**

5 **UNFAIR AND DECEPTIVE ACTS AND PRACTICES**  
6 **IN VIOLATION OF THE CONSUMERS LEGAL REMEDIES ACT**

7 **(All Defendants)**

8  
9 73. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference the allegations set forth in each of the  
10 preceding paragraphs of this Complaint.

11  
12 74. Plaintiff and members of the CLRA subclass are “consumers,” as that term is defined  
13 by Civil Code section 1761(d) because they bought Airborne for personal, family, or household  
14 purposes.

15  
16 75. Plaintiff, members of the CLRA subclass, and Defendants have engaged in  
17 “transactions,” as that term is defined by Civil Code section 1761(e).

18  
19 76. The conduct alleged in this Complaint constitute unfair methods of competition and  
20 unfair and deceptive acts and practices for the purposes of the CLRA, and were undertaken by  
21 Defendants in transactions intended to result in, and which resulted in, the sale of goods to consumers.

22  
23 77. As alleged more fully in Paragraphs 20 through 56, above, and as demonstrated in  
24 Exhibits A and B hereto, Defendants have violated the CLRA by falsely representing to Plaintiff and  
25 the CLRA subclass **(a)** that Airborne can prevent a person from catching a common cold if taken  
26 before entering a crowded environment; **(b)** that Airborne can prevent a person from catching a  
27 common cold if taken at the “first sign” of a cold; and **(c)** that Airborne can hasten the recovery  
28 from a common cold.

1           78.     As a result of engaging in such conduct, Defendants have violated Civil Code section  
2 1770, subdivisions (a)(5), (a)(7), and (a)(9). Pursuant to Section 1782 of the CLRA, Plaintiff has  
3 notified Defendants in writing of their violations of the CLRA (the “Notice”) and have demanded that  
4 they correct or otherwise rectify the problem created by their misrepresentations and other deceptive  
5 and unfair business practices.

6  
7           79.     Defendants have failed to make an appropriate correction, repair or replacement, or  
8 other remedy with respect to Airborne.

9  
10           80.     Plaintiff and the members of the CLRA subclass have suffered damages as a result of  
11 Defendants’ violations of the CLRA. Accordingly, Plaintiff seek an award of damages pursuant to  
12 Civil Code section 1780(a), subdivision (a)(1).

13  
14           81.     The willful, deliberate, and deceptive nature of the conduct described herein, including  
15 but not limited to Defendants’ exposing consumers to potentially dangerous doses of vitamin C and  
16 vitamin A, entitles Plaintiff and the CLRA subclass to an award of punitive damages pursuant to Civil  
17 Code section 1780(a)(4).

18  
19           82.     Pursuant to Civil Code section 1780, subdivisions (a)(2), (a)(3), and (a)(5), Plaintiff  
20 seeks and order of this Court that includes, but is not limited to, requiring Defendants **(a)** to remove  
21 depictions of sneezing and coughing people and of germs from Airborne packaging and  
22 advertisements; **(b)** to remove all anti-viral claims from Airborne packaging and advertisements; **(c)** to  
23 advise consumers that taking in excess of two doses of Airborne per day exceeds the upper safe limit  
24 for vitamins A and C; **(d)** to explain the potential danger in taking Airborne in conjunction with other  
25 vitamin supplements; **(e)** to cease representing that Airborne will cure or provide “immediate”  
26 protection against the common cold; **(f)** to comply with all applicable requirements of the Sherman Law  
27 (including, but not limited to **(i)** unlawfully labeling packages of Airborne, **(ii)** making an implicit  
28 disease claim (by depicting sneezing and coughing passengers on Airborne packages and by making

1 claims that Airborne can prevent or hasten the recovery from a common cold), (iii) by making  
2 unlawful nutrient-content claims (by, e.g., failing to state the specific amount of the nutrients, except  
3 with respect to vitamins A and C and amino acids, rather than listing the cumulative amounts of these  
4 ingredients), (iv) failing to include information in the Supplement Facts panel on the Airborne  
5 package, (v) making statements as to the role of a nutrient or dietary ingredient intended to affect the  
6 structure or function in humans or describes general well-being from consumption of a nutrient or  
7 dietary ingredient; (vi) misbranding any food or drug, Health & Safety Code §§ 10398 & 111445,  
8 (vii) manufacturing, selling, delivering, holding, or offering for sale any food or drug that is  
9 misbranded, *id.* §§ 10398, 111440, and (viii) receiving in commerce any food or drug that is  
10 misbranded, or delivering or proffering it for delivery, *id.* §§ 110770, 111450); (j) to compel  
11 Defendants to provide restitution and to disgorge all revenues obtained as a result of their violations  
12 of the CLRA; and (k) to compel Defendants to pay Plaintiff's and the class's attorney fees and  
13 costs.

14  
15 **THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION**

16 **VIOLATIONS OF THE FALSE ADVERTISING LAW**

17 **(All Defendants)**

18 83. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference the allegations set forth in each of the  
19 preceding paragraphs of this Complaint.

20  
21 84. As alleged in Paragraphs 20 through 56, above, and as demonstrated in Exhibits A and  
22 B hereto, Defendants have falsely advertised Airborne by falsely claiming that Airborne can and does  
23 prevent the common cold if taken before entering a crowded environment, and can and does hasten  
24 recovery from a cold if Airborne is taken at the "first sign" of a cold.

25  
26 85. Plaintiff and the members of the proposed class have suffered injury in fact and have  
27 lost money or property as a result of Defendants' violations of the FAL.

1           86. Pursuant to Business & Professions Code §§ 17203 and 17535, Plaintiff seeks and  
2 order of this Court that includes, but is not limited to, requiring Defendants **(a)** to remove depictions of  
3 sneezing and coughing people and of germs from Airborne packaging and advertisements; **(b)** to  
4 remove all anti-viral claims from Airborne packaging and advertisements; **(c)** to advise consumers that  
5 taking in excess of two doses of Airborne per day exceeds the upper safe limit for vitamins A and C;  
6 **(d)** to explain the potential danger in taking Airborne in conjunction with other vitamin supplements;  
7 **(e)** to cease representing that Airborne will cure or provide “immediate” protection against the common  
8 cold; **(f)** to comply with all applicable requirements of the Sherman Law (including, but not limited to  
9 **(i)** unlawfully labeling packages of Airborne, **(ii)** making an implicit disease claim (by depicting  
10 sneezing and coughing passengers on Airborne packages and by making claims that Airborne can  
11 prevent or hasten the recovery from a common cold), **(iii)** by making unlawful nutrient-content claims  
12 (by, *e.g.*, failing to state the specific amount of the nutrients, except with respect to vitamins A and C  
13 and amino acids, rather than listing the cumulative amounts of these ingredients), **(iv)** failing to include  
14 information in the Supplement Facts panel on the Airborne package, **(v)** making statements as to the  
15 role of a nutrient or dietary ingredient intended to affect the structure or function in humans or  
16 describes general well-being from consumption of a nutrient or dietary ingredient; **(vi)** misbranding  
17 any food or drug, Health & Safety Code §§ 10398 & 111445, **(vii)** manufacturing, selling,  
18 delivering, holding, or offering for sale any food or drug that is misbranded, *id.* §§ 10398, 111440,  
19 and **(viii)** receiving in commerce any food or drug that is misbranded, or delivering or proffering it  
20 for delivery, *id.* §§ 110770, 111450); **(j)** to compel Defendants to provide restitution and to disgorge  
21 all revenues obtained as a result of their violations of the FAL; and **(k)** to compel Defendants to pay  
22 Plaintiff’s and the class’s attorney fees and costs.  
23  
24  
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28

**FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION**  
**VIOLATIONS OF THE UNFAIR COMPETITION LAW**  
**(All Defendants)**

1  
2  
3  
4  
5       87. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference the allegations set forth in each of the  
6 preceding paragraphs of this Complaint.

7  
8       88. By committing the acts and practices alleged herein, Defendants have engaged in  
9 deceptive, unfair and unlawful business practices in violation of California's Unfair Competition  
10 Law as to the class as a whole. Defendants' violations of the UCL include, but are not limited to,  
11 the following:

12  
13       a.     **Unlawful Conduct:** Defendants have violated the UCL's proscription  
14 against engaging in unlawful conduct as a result of **(i)** their violations of the CLRA, Civil Code  
15 sections 1770, subdivisions (a)(5), (a)(7) and (a)(9), as alleged above; **(ii)** their violations of the FAL,  
16 Bus. & Prof. Code §§ 17500-17536, as alleged above; and **(iii)** their violations of the Sherman Law,  
17 including, but not limited to, **(a)** unlawfully labeling packages of Airborne, **(b)** making an implicit  
18 disease claim (by depicting sneezing and coughing passengers on Airborne packages and by making  
19 claims that Airborne can prevent or hasten the recovery from a common cold), **(c)** by making unlawful  
20 nutrient-content claims (by, *e.g.*, failing to state the specific amount of the nutrients, except with  
21 respect to vitamins A and C and amino acids, rather than listing the cumulative amounts of these  
22 ingredients), **(d)** failing to include information in the Supplement Facts panel on the Airborne package,  
23 **(e)** making statements as to the role of a nutrient or dietary ingredient intended to affect the structure  
24 or function in humans or describes general well-being from consumption of a nutrient or dietary  
25 ingredient; **(f)** misbranding any food or drug, Health & Safety Code §§ 10398 & 111445, **(g)**  
26 manufacturing, selling, delivering, holding, or offering for sale any food or drug that is misbranded,  
27 *id.* §§ 10398, 111440, and **(h)** receiving in commerce any food or drug that is misbranded, or  
28 delivering or proffering it for delivery, *id.* §§ 110770, 111450).

1           b.     **Fraudulent Conduct:** Defendants have violated the UCL’s proscription  
2 against fraud by falsely advertising Airborne, as in Paragraphs 20 through 56 of this Complaint.

3  
4           c.     **Unfair Conduct:** Defendants have violated the UCL’s proscription against  
5 unfair conduct by engaging in the conduct alleged in Paragraphs 20 through 56 of this Complaint.

6  
7           89.    Defendants’ violations of the UCL continue to this day. Plaintiff and all members of  
8 the class have suffered injury in fact and have lost money or property as a result of Defendants’  
9 violations of the UCL.

10  
11          90.    Pursuant to Business & Professions Code § 17203, Plaintiff seeks and order of this  
12 Court that includes, but is not limited to, requiring Defendants **(a)** to remove depictions of sneezing  
13 and coughing people and of germs from Airborne packaging and advertisements; **(b)** to remove all  
14 anti-viral claims from Airborne packaging and advertisements; **(c)** to advise consumers that taking in  
15 excess of two doses of Airborne per day exceeds the upper safe limit for vitamins A and C; **(d)** to  
16 explain the potential danger in taking Airborne in conjunction with other vitamin supplements; **(e)** to  
17 cease representing that Airborne will cure or provide “immediate” protection against the common cold;  
18 **(f)** to comply with all applicable requirements of the Sherman Law (including, but not limited to **(i)**  
19 unlawfully labeling packages of Airborne, **(ii)** making an implicit disease claim (by depicting sneezing  
20 and coughing passengers on Airborne packages and by making claims that Airborne can prevent or  
21 hasten the recovery from a common cold), **(iii)** by making unlawful nutrient-content claims (by, *e.g.*,  
22 failing to state the specific amount of the nutrients, except with respect to vitamins A and C and amino  
23 acids, rather than listing the cumulative amounts of these ingredients), **(iv)** failing to include  
24 information in the Supplement Facts panel on the Airborne package, **(v)** making statements as to the  
25 role of a nutrient or dietary ingredient intended to affect the structure or function in humans or  
26 describes general well-being from consumption of a nutrient or dietary ingredient; **(vi)** misbranding  
27 any food or drug, Health & Safety Code §§ 10398 & 111445, **(vii)** manufacturing, selling,  
28 delivering, holding, or offering for sale any food or drug that is misbranded, *id.* §§ 10398, 111440,

1 and (viii) receiving in commerce any food or drug that is misbranded, or delivering or proffering it  
2 for delivery, *id.* §§ 110770, 111450); (j) to compel Defendants to provide restitution and to disgorge  
3 all revenues obtained as a result of their violations of the UCL; and (k) to compel Defendants to pay  
4 Plaintiff's and the class's attorney fees and costs.

5  
6 **FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

7 **UNJUST ENRICHMENT**

8 **(All Defendants)**

9 91. Plaintiff realleges and incorporate by reference the allegations set forth in each of  
10 the preceding paragraphs of this Complaint.

11  
12 92. By engaging in the conduct described in this Complaint, Defendants have been  
13 unjustly enriched by their sale of Airborne by the use of false advertising and by engaging in  
14 fraudulent and deceptive conduct to persuade consumers that Airborne actually prevents the  
15 common cold and hastens the recovery of colds that are contracted before using it.

16  
17 93. As a proximate result of Defendants' unlawful, fraudulent, and unfair conduct,  
18 Defendants have obtained revenues by which they became unjustly enriched at Plaintiff and  
19 members of the proposed class's expense. Under the circumstances alleged herein, it would be  
20 unfair and inequitable for Defendants to retain the profits it has unjustly obtained at the expense of  
21 the Plaintiff and the class.

22  
23 94. Accordingly, Plaintiff seeks an order establishing Defendants as constructive  
24 trustees of the profits that served to unjustly enrich them, together with interest during the period in  
25 which Defendants have retained such funds, and requiring Defendants to disgorge those funds to  
26 Plaintiff and members of the proposed class in a manner to be determined by the Court.

1 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

2  
3 WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, on behalf of himself and as representative of all other persons  
4 similarly situated, prays for judgment against Defendants, as follows:  
5

6 1. for an order certifying the class and the CLRA subclass to proceed as a class action,  
7 and appointing Plaintiff, David Wilson, and his counsel, to represent the class;  
8

9 2. for judicial declaration of the parties' respective rights and duties with respect to the  
10 alter-ego issues alleged in the First Cause of Action;  
11

12 3. for an award of damages pursuant to Civil Code section 1780(a)(1);  
13

14 4. for an award of restitution pursuant to Civil Code section 1780(a)(3);  
15

16 5. for an award of punitive damages pursuant to Civil Code section 1780(a)(4);  
17

18 6. for an award of restitution pursuant to Bus. & Prof. Code §§ 17203, 17535;  
19

20 7. for an award of disgorgement pursuant to Bus. & Prof. Code §§ 17203, 17535;  
21

22 8. for an order awarding restitution to prevent Defendants from becoming unjustly  
23 enriched as a result of their unlawful and deceptive conduct.  
24

25 9. for an order enjoining Defendants' unlawful and deceptive acts and practices  
26 pursuant to Civ. Code § 1780(a)(2) and Bus. & Prof. Code §§ 17203, 17535 as follows:  
27  
28

1 a. to remove depictions of sneezing and coughing people and of germs  
2 from Airborne packaging and advertisements;

3  
4 b. remove all anti-viral claims from Airborne packaging and  
5 advertisements;

6  
7 c. to advise consumers that taking in excess of two doses of Airborne per  
8 day exceeds the upper safe limit for vitamins A and C;

9  
10 d. to explain the potential danger in taking Airborne in conjunction with  
11 other vitamin supplements;

12  
13 e. to cease representing that Airborne will cure or provide “immediate”  
14 protection against the common cold;

15  
16 f. to comply with all applicable requirements of the Sherman Law;

17  
18 g. to cease representing that Airborne prevents the common cold if taken  
19 shortly before entering a crowded environment; and

20  
21 h. to cease making reference to the Clinical Study as support for Airborne’s  
22 efficacy as a cold remedy.

23  
24 10. for an award of attorney fees;

25  
26 11. for an award of costs;

27  
28 12. for an award of pre- and post-judgment interest on any amounts awarded; and

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13. for any and all other relief the Court deems just and proper.

**DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL**

Plaintiff and the class demand a jury trial in this action for all the claims so triable.

DATED: May 21, 2007

WASSERMAN, COMDEN & CASSELMAN LLP

by \_\_\_\_\_  
Melissa M. Harnett  
Attorneys for Plaintiff