

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Swetala v. Quten Research Institute, LLC

No. 1:24-cv-00620-JLT-BAM (E.D. Cal. Mar. 28, 2025) · No. 1:24-cv-00620-JLT-BAM · Decided March 28,
2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California considers Quten Research Institute, LLC’s motion to dismiss claims arising from allegedly misleading dosage representations on Qunol dietary-supplement labels. The court denies dismissal of the consumer-protection, negligent-misrepresentation, and intentional-misrepresentation claims, but grants dismissal with leave to amend of the express- and implied-warranty claims and the quasi-contract/unjust-enrichment claim. The court also addresses judicial notice and standing-related issues concerning the requested relief.

OPINION

Swetala v. Quten Research Institute, LLC

PER CURIAM.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

9 EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

10 11 ANTHONY SWETALA, individually and Case No. 1:24-cv-00620-JLT-BAM on behalf of
all others similarly situated 12 and the general public, 13 Plaintiff, ORDER GRANTING IN
PART AND

DENYING IN PART DEFENDANT’S

14 v. MOTION TO DISMISS

15 QUTEN RESEARCH INSTITUTE, LLC, (Doc. 20)

16 Defendant. 17

18 I. INTRODUCTION

19 Before the Court is Quten Research Institute, LLC’s motion to dismiss Anthony Swetala’s 20
complaint. (Doc. 20.) For the reasons set forth below, Defendant’s motion to dismiss is granted 21
in part and denied in part.

22 II. BACKGROUND

23 Defendant makes, distributes, sells, and markets a wide variety of dietary supplements 24
under the brand name Qunol. (Doc. 1, ¶ 1.) In January 2023, Plaintiff purchased Defendant’s 25
Qunol Extra Strength Tumeric 1000mg supplement. (Id., ¶ 22.) Plaintiff relied on the front label,
26 which led Plaintiff to believe that each capsule of the product contained the advertised dosage

of 27 1,000mg of turmeric per capsule, to select and purchase Defendant's product. (Id., ¶ 23.) 28 Plaintiff alleges that he reasonable believed that each capsule contained the full 1,000mg dosage 1 but later recognized that "more than one capsule would need to be consumed to receive the 2 advertised dosage of turmeric." (Id.) Plaintiff alleges that if he had known that one capsule did 3 not contain the full dosage, he would not have purchased the product or would have paid 4 significantly less for them. (Id., ¶ 24.) Based on these alleged misrepresentations, Plaintiff seeks 5 to represent a class of all individuals who purchased one of eleven substantially similarly 6 deceptive Qunol products in California for recovery of damages, restitution, disgorgement, 7 punitive damages, and injunctive relief.¹ (Id., ¶ 125.)

8 III. JUDICIAL NOTICE

9 Defendant requests this Court take judicial notice of the Walmart and Target websites for 10 the Qunol Minerals Extra Strength Magnesium 420mg 120-capsule product and the NatureMade 11 Extra Strength Magnesium 400mg 60-softgel product. (Doc. 20-1 at 2.) In ruling upon a motion 12 to dismiss, the Court may consider matters which may be judicially noticed pursuant to Federal 13 Rule of Evidence 201. See *Mir v. Little Co. of Mary Hospital*, 844 F.2d 646, 649 (9th Cir. 1988).

14 Rule 201 permits a court to take judicial notice of an adjudicative fact "not subject to reasonable

15 dispute" because the fact is either "(1) generally known within the territorial jurisdiction of the 16 trial court or (2) capable of accurate and ready determination by resort to sources whose accuracy 17 cannot reasonably be questioned." Fed. R. Evid. 201(b). "Even if a document is not attached to 18 the complaint, it may be incorporated by reference into a complaint if the plaintiff refers 19 extensively to the document or the document forms the basis of the plaintiff's claim." *United 20 States v. Ritchie*, 342 F.3d 903, 908 (9th Cir. 2003); see also *Kneivel v. ESPN*, 393 F.3d 1068, 21 1076 (9th Cir. 2005). "The defendant may offer such a document, and the district court may treat 22 such a document as part of the complaint, and thus may assume that its contents are true for 23 purposes of a motion to dismiss under Rule 12(b)(6)." *Ritchie*, 342 F.3d at 908. In the context of 24 a motion to dismiss claims based upon allegedly misleading product labels, the Court may take 25 26 1 Plaintiff's complaint identifies eleven products under the brand name Qunol: Extra Strength Magnesium 420mg, Magnesium Gummies 200mg, Extra Strength Turmeric Curcumin Complex 1000mg, Turmeric 2250mg, Turmeric +

27 Ginger 2400mg, Turmeric Gummies 500mg, Turmeric 500mg + Ginger 50mg Gummies, Turmeric + Ginger

Gummies 550mg, Turmeric + Ginger Chews 750mg, CoQ10 Gummies 100mg, and Ultra Omega-3 Fish Oil 1000mg. 28 (Doc. 1, ¶ 1.) Because Plaintiff alleges that the claims permeate all products, (Id., ¶¶ 36–37), the Court will discuss 1 judicial notice of the images depicting the product labels at issue, *Von Koenig v. Snapple 2 Beverage Corp.*, 713 F. Supp. 2d 1066, 1073 (E.D. Cal. 2010), without having to convert the 3 motion to dismiss into a motion for summary

judgment. See *Kniesel*, 303 F.3d at 1076. 4 Plaintiff's complaint alleges several causes of action that are premised on the labels 5 affixed to Defendant's products comparative to the labels affixed to NatureMade's products, and 6 the price differentials between the two. (See generally Doc. 1.) Because Plaintiff incorporated by 7 reference Defendant's label and price and NatureMade's label and price in his complaint, see 8 *Kniesel*, 393 F.3d at 1076, the Court will take judicial notice of the Target and Walmart websites 9 presenting this information underlying the alleged product misrepresentation claims, see *Von 10 Koenig*, 713 F. Supp. 2d at 1073.2 However, the Court's judicial notice "extends only to the 11 existence of these documents and not to their substance, which may contain disputed or irrelevant 12 facts." *Givens v. Newsom*, 629 F. Supp. 3d 1020, 1024 (E.D. Cal. 2022).

13 IV. LEGAL STANDARDS

14 A. Rule 12(b)(1) 15 "Federal courts are courts of limited jurisdiction, possessing 'only that power authorized 16 by Constitution and statute.'" *Gunn v. Minton*, 568 U.S. 251, 256 (2013) (quoting *Kokkonen v. 17 Guardian Life Ins. Co. of Am.*, 511 U.S. 375, 377 (1994)). As such, "[i]t is to be presumed that a 18 cause lies outside this limited jurisdiction . . . and the burden of establishing the contrary rests 19 upon the party asserting jurisdiction." *Kokkonen*, 511 U.S. at 377. Pursuant to Rule 12(b)(1) of 20 the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, a party may challenge a claim for relief for lack of 21 subject-matter jurisdiction. Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(b)(1). It is well-established that Article III 22 "[s]tanding is a constitutional requirement for the exercise of subject matter jurisdiction over 23 disputes in federal court." *Tailford v. Experian Info. Sols., Inc.*, 26 F.4th 1092, 1099 (9th Cir. 24 2022). "[P]laintiffs must demonstrate standing for each claim that they press and for each form of 25 relief that they seek (for example, injunctive relief and damages)." *TransUnion LLC v. Ramirez*, 26 27 2 Plaintiff does not object to Defendant's request for judicial notice. (See generally Doc. 27.) Even still, the Court notes that Plaintiff alleges that he "purchased the Qunol Extra Strength Turmeric 1000 mg product at a Walmart store 28 located at 1110 East Prosperity Ave., Tulare, CA in or around January 2023" (Doc. 1 ¶¶ 11, 22) not that he purchased 1 594 U.S. 413, 430–31 (2021) (parenthetical in original). 2 B. Rule 12(b)(6) 3 Under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6), a party may file a motion to dismiss on 4 the grounds that a complaint "fail[s] to state a claim upon which relief can be granted." Fed. R. 5 Civ. P. 12(b) (6). A motion to dismiss pursuant to Rule 12(b)(6) tests the legal sufficiency of the 6 complaint. *Navarro v. Block*, 250 F.3d 729, 732 (9th Cir. 2001). In deciding a motion to dismiss, 7 "all allegations of material fact are taken as true and construed in the light most favorable to the 8 non-moving party." *In re Facebook, Inc. Internet Tracking Litig.*, 956 F.3d 589, 601 (9th Cir. 9 2020). In assessing the sufficiency of a complaint, all well-pleaded factual allegations must be 10 accepted as true. *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678–79 (2009). 11 A claim is facially plausible "when the plaintiff pleads factual content that allows the 12 court to draw the reasonable inference that the defendant is liable for the misconduct alleged." 13 *Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 678. A complaint that offers mere "labels and conclusions" or "a formulaic 14 recitation of the elements of a cause

of action will not do.” *Id.*; see also *Moss v. U.S. Secret Serv.*, 15 572 F.3d 962, 969 (9th Cir. 2009). “Dismissal is proper only where there is no cognizable legal 16 theory or an absence of sufficient facts alleged to support a cognizable legal theory.” *Navarro*, 17 250 F.3d at 732. 18 If the court dismisses the complaint, it “should grant leave to amend even if no request to 19 amend the pleading was made, unless it determines that the pleading could not possibly be cured 20 by the allegation of other facts.” *Lopez v. Smith*, 203 F.3d 1122, 1127 (9th Cir. 2000). In making 21 this determination, the court should consider factors such as “the presence or absence of undue 22 delay, bad faith, dilatory motive, repeated failure to cure deficiencies by previous amendments, 23 undue prejudice to the opposing party and futility of the proposed amendment.” *Moore v. 24 Kayport Package Express*, 885 F.2d 531, 538 (9th Cir. 1989).

25 V. DISCUSSION

26 Plaintiff alleges eight causes of action against Defendant: (1) violation of California’s 27 Unfair Competition Law; (2) violation of California’s False Advertising Law; (3) violation of 28 California’s Consumers Legal Remedies Act; (4) breach of express warranties under California 1 Commercial Code § 2313(1); (5) breach of implied warranties under California Commercial Code 2 § 2314; (6) negligent misrepresentations; (7) intentional misrepresentation/fraud; and (8) quasi- 3 contract/unjust enrichment. Defendant moves to dismiss each of these claims, along with 4 Plaintiff’s pursuit of injunctive relief on standing grounds. (See Doc. 20.) The Court will address 5 each in turn. 6 C. Consumer Deception Claims 7 Defendant moves to dismiss Plaintiff’s first, second, and third claims, (see generally Doc. 8 20), on the grounds that “no reasonable consumer would be deceived because the front labels do 9 not provide any information at all about the number of doses or servings in the container, much 10 less promise that the number of capsules, gummies, or chews will always equal the number of 11 servings per container.” (*Id.* at 11 (emphasis in original)). For claims arising under California’s 12 CLRA, UCL, and FAL, the plaintiff must show that reasonable consumers are likely to be 13 deceived by the label. *Williams v. Gerber Prods. Co.*, 552 F.3d 934, 938 (9th Cir. 2008). The 14 reasonable consumer test requires the plaintiff to “show that members of the public are likely to 15 be deceived.” *Ebner v. Fresh, Inc.*, 838 F.3d 958, 965 (9th Cir. 2016) (quotations omitted). This 16 standard also applies to common law fraud, intentional misrepresentation, and negligent 17 misrepresentation claims. See *Freeman v. Time, Inc.*, 68 F.3d 285, 289 (9th Cir. 1995) 18 (explaining that common law fraud requires showing that the label would mislead a reasonable 19 person); *Morn v. Am. Messaging Servs., LLC*, No. SACV 14-1635-DOC, 2014 WL 12660529, at 20 *2 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 18, 2014) (explaining that intentional misrepresentation requires the same 21 elements and standard as common law fraud); *Girard v. Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.*, 316 22 Fed. App’x. 561, 562 (9th Cir. 2008) (holding that the “justifiable reliance” element of negligent 23 misrepresentation equates to the “reasonable consumer” standard). 24 “Whether a reasonable consumer would be deceived by a product label is generally a 25 question of fact not amenable to determination on a motion to dismiss.” *Girard*, 316 Fed. App’x 26 at 562. However, the court may determine, as a

matter of law, that the alleged violations of the 27 CLRA, UCL, and FAL are simply not plausible. See, e.g., *Chong v. Nestle Water N. Am., Inc.*,

28 No. 20-56373, 2021 WL 4938128, at *1 (9th Cir. Oct. 22, 2021) (“[T]his Court may conclude on

1 the pleadings that no reasonable consumer would be misled by any of the product labels at issue
2 in this suit.”); *Werbel ex rel. v. Pepsico, Inc.*, No. 09-cv-04456-SBA, 2010 WL 2673860, at *3 3
(N.D. Cal. July 2, 2010) (holding that a reasonable consumer would not be deceived into 4
believing that “Crunch Berries” cereal derived significant nutritional value from fruit). 5
“Dismissal is appropriate when ‘the advertisement itself [makes] it impossible for the plaintiff to 6
prove that a reasonable consumer [is] likely to be deceived.’” *Whiteside v. Kimberly Clark Corp.*,
7 108 F.4th 771, 778 (9th Cir. 2024) (quoting *Williams*, 552 F.3d at 938–39.) The reasonable 8
consumer test therefore “requires more than a mere possibility that [the defendant’s] label ‘might
9 conceivably be misunderstood by some few consumers viewing it in an unreasonable manner.’”
10 *Ebner*, 838 F.3d at 965 (quoting *Lavie v. Proctor & Gamble Co.*, 105 Cal. App. 4th 496, 508 11
(2003)). “Rather, the reasonable consumer standard requires a probability that a significant 12
portion of the general consuming public or of targeted consumers, acting reasonably in the 13
circumstances, could be misled.” *Id.* 14 The Ninth Circuit has articulated an approach for
evaluating packaging for consumer 15 deception claims at the pleadings stage. See *Whiteside*, 108
F.4th at 778–81. A court must begin 16 its analysis with the front label, as reasonable consumers
are not expected to look beyond 17 unambiguous misleading representations on the front label to
determine the truth from the rest of 18 the packaging, especially the ingredients list. *Id.* at 778.
Thus, “if a product’s front label is 19 plausibly misleading to reasonable consumers, then the court
does not consider the back label at 20 the pleadings stage.” *Id.* However, the front label must
“convey[] a concrete and unambiguous 21 meaning to a reasonable consumer” to foreclose
consideration of the back label. *Id.* at 782; see 22 also *McGinty v. Proctor & Gamble Co.*, 96 F.4th
1093, 1098 (9th Cir. 2023) (“[T]he front label 23 must be unambiguously deceptive for a
defendant to be precluded from insisting that the back 24 label be considered with the front label”
at the pleadings stage (emphasis added)). “[A] front 25 label is not ambiguous simply because it is
susceptible to two possible meanings; a front label is 26 ambiguous when reasonable consumers
would necessarily require more information before 27 reasonably concluding that the label is
making a particular representation.” *Whiteside*, 108 F.4th 28 at 781 (quoting *McGinty*, 96 F.4th at
1097). Only when the court determines the front label is 1 ambiguous may the Court look to the
back label at the pleadings stage. *Id.* at 781. 2 Looking at the Extra Strength Turmeric 1000mg
supplement purchased by Plaintiff, the 3 front label makes various representations: (1) “#1 Doctor
Recommended form of turmeric 4 curcumin”; (2) “Extra Strength Turmeric Curcumin Complex”;
(3) “Ultra High Absorption”; (4) 5 “1000mg”; (5) “Hydro Soluble Technology”; (6) “120
Vegetarian Capsules” and (7) “Dietary 6 Supplement.” (Doc. 1 at 7.) Plaintiff alleges that these
representations “mislead[] reasonable 7 consumers into believing that each capsule, chew, or

gummy unit contains the advertised dosage 8 of nutrients.” (Id., ¶ 16.) Defendant argues that Plaintiff’s consumer deception claims should be 9 dismissed because Plaintiff “cannot plausibly show that a significant portion of consumers could 10 be misled by the Products’ front labels.” (Doc. 20 at 18.) In the alternative, if the front label is 11 ambiguous, Defendant argues that the Court should consider the back label, which “plainly 12 state[s] the serving size for the dosage amount and the number of servings,” to dispel any alleged 13 misrepresentations. (Id. at 18–19.) 14 In *Walters v. Vitamin Shoppe Industries*, the Ninth Circuit held that a plaintiff “did not 15 have a duty to validate claims on the front of a product’s label by cross-checking them against 16 information contained in small print on the back.” 701 Fed. Appx. 667, 670 (9th Cir. 2017) 17 (“*Walters II*”); see also *Williams*, 552 F.3d at 939–40 (“We do not think that the FDA requires an 18 ingredient list so that manufacturers can mislead consumers and then rely on the ingredients list to 19 correct those misinterpretations and provide a shield for liability for the deception. Instead, 20 reasonable consumers expect that the ingredient list contains more detailed information about the 21 product that confirms other representations on the packaging.”). The plaintiff in *Walters* alleged 22 that the products sold by the defendant had misleading labels because they displayed dosage 23 information per serving rather than per unit. *Walters v. Vitamin Shoppe Indus., Inc.*, No. 24 3:14-CV-00173-PK, 2015 WL 3916972, at *2 (D. Or. June 25, 2015) (“*Walters I*”). One of the 25 labels at issue was Calcium 1000mg Caramel Chews, which required individuals to consume a 26 two-chew serving to receive the full 1000mg of calcium shown on the product’s front label. Id. 27 In *Walters I*, the court dismissed plaintiff’s fraud claim because the back label included clarifying 28 information in small print. Id. at *8. The Ninth Circuit reversed, explaining that “[c]onsumers 1 review the small print on a product’s label to learn additional details about a product, not to 2 correct potentially misleading representations found on the front.” *Walters II*, 701 Fed. Appx. at 3 670 (citing *Williams*, 552 F.3d at 939–40). Thus, when the front label displays a dosage without 4 specifying if the dosage is per unit or per serving, the front label is unambiguous such that a 5 plaintiff need not turn to the back label for further information. Id.; see also *Cimoli v. Alacer 6 Corp.*, 546 F. Supp. 3d 897, 903 (N.D. Cal. 2021) (holding that when the representations on the 7 front label had a dosage representation regarding Vitamin C content without any indication as to 8 whether the dosage was per serving or per gummy, a reasonable consumer would be 9 unambiguously led to believe the dosage was per gummy); *Tarvin v. Olly Public Benefit Corp.*,

10 No. 2:24-cv-06261-WLH-PD 2024 WL 4866271, at *3 (C.D. Cal. 2024) (holding that the front 11 label was unambiguously deceptive when the label indicated that the supplement had a 5mg 12 dosage and the number of units per container, even though the back label clarified that a 13 consumer must ingest two units of gummies to obtain the 5mg advertised). 14 As in *Walters*, the representations on the front label of Defendant’s products include a 15 specific dosage representation without any indication as to whether the dosage is per capsule or 16 per serving. (Doc. 1 at 7.) Defendant argues that “[t]here is nothing [on the front label] from 17 which to infer

that there is a one-to-one correlation between the dosage amount and the number of 18 capsules, gummies or chews.” (Doc. 20 at 20.) However, the absence of specific statements 19 correlating dosage to the unit number is synonymous with the product label in Walters II. In 20 Walters II, the Ninth Circuit relied solely on the front label to hold that a plaintiff did not have a 21 duty to validate if there was or was not a direct correlation between dosage and unit number. See 22 Walters II, 701 Fed. Appx. at 670. Similarly, in Tarvin, the court held that a reasonable consumer 23 would be misled by the front label “to believe that each unit contained the advertised dosage 24 amount” when the front label listed “the dosage amount along with the unit quantity without any 25 additional qualifications or information on servings.” Id. at *3. Nearly identical to the label in 26 Walters and Tarvin, the front label here indicated a “1000mg” dosage and that the package 27 included “120 vegetarian capsules,” with no additional qualifications or information on the 28 number of servings. See Walters I, 2015 WL 3916972, at *2; Tarvin, 2024 WL 4866271, at *3. 1 Thus, the Court finds that Plaintiff sufficiently pled that a reasonable consumer would be misled 2 by the front label. Therefore, the Court DENIES Defendant’s motion to dismiss Plaintiff’s 3 consumer protection claims in counts one, two, and three. 4 D. Breach of Express and Implied Warranties Claims 5 Under California law, to state a claim for breach of express warranty, the plaintiff must 6 show “(1) [the seller] made an affirmation of fact or promise or provided a description of its 7 goods; (2) the promise or description formed part of the basis of the bargain; (3) the express 8 warranty was breached; and (4) the breach caused injury to the plaintiff.” Corbett v. PharmaCare 9 U.S., Inc., 567 F. Supp. 3d 1172, 1199 (S.D. Cal. 2021). “To constitute a warranty and be 10 actionable, the statement must be specific and unequivocal.” Id. Furthermore, the plaintiff must 11 allege reasonable reliance on the breach of that warranty. *Blennisv. Hewlett-Packard Co.*, No. 12 C 07-00333-JF, 2008 WL 818526, at *2 (N.D. Cal. Mar. 25, 2008) (quoting *Williams v. Beechnut 13 Nutrition Corp.*, 185 Cal. App. 3d 135, 142 (1986)). “When an implied warranty of 14 merchantability cause of action is based solely on whether the product in dispute conforms to the 15 promises or affirmations of fact on the packaging of the product, the implied warranty of 16 merchantability claim rises and falls with express warranty claims brought for the same product.” 17 *Hadley v. Kellogg Sales Co.*, 243 F. Supp. 3d 1074, 1106 (N.D. Cal. 2017) (citing *Hendricks v. 18 StarKist Co.*, 30 F. Supp. 3d 917, 933 (N.D. Cal. 2014)). 19 Defendant argues that Plaintiff fails to plead an affirmation of fact or promise. (Doc. 20 at 20 29–30.) Defendant contends that Plaintiff’s broad allegation that the dosage information is 21 misleading is not “specific and unequivocal” to constitute an express warranty that each capsule 22 contained the dosage amount. (Id. at 30.) Though the Court has found that the dosage 23 representations on the front label could mislead a reasonable consumer, the Court agrees that the 24 representation does not rise to the level of an express “affirmation of fact or promise” that the 25 dosage amount is per unit. See, e.g., *Nacarino v. KSF Acquisition Corp.*, 642 F. Supp. 3d 1074, 26 1086 (N.D. Cal. 2022) (holding that even though the plaintiff sufficiently plead a 27 misrepresentation for the consumer protection claims, the “20g protein” representation did not 28 “constitute an express

statement that the amount of protein is per serving/scoop alone”); *Cimoli*, 1 546 F. Supp. 3d at 900, 905 (holding no breach of express warranty where label of Vitamin C 2 gummies, which stated “750mg Vitamin C . . . [did] not amount to an unequivocal statement or 3 promise that the dosage [was] per gummy” and was “otherwise truthful”). Thus, the Court finds 4 that Plaintiff has failed to state an express warranty claim for which relief can be granted. 5 Because the express and implied warranty claims are predicated on the same “affirmation of fact 6 or promise,” (see Doc. 1, ¶¶ 88–101), the implied warranty claim likewise fails. See *Cimoli*, 546 7 F. Supp. 3d at 905; see also *Nacarino*, 642 F. Supp. 3d at 1086. Accordingly, Defendant’s 8 motion to dismiss Plaintiff’s breach of express and implied warranty claims are GRANTED with 9 leave to amend. 10

E. Negligent and Intentional Misrepresentation Claims 11 Plaintiff also brings common law fraud claims of intentional and negligent 12 misrepresentation. See *Biggs v. Bank of Am. Corp.*, No. EDCV 15-00267-VAP, 2017 13 WL11648863, at *3 (C.D. Cal. July 28, 2017) (explaining that intentional and negligent 14 misrepresentation claims are equivalent to common law fraud claims). (Doc. 1, ¶¶ 102–19.) 15 Under California law, to state a claim for intentional misrepresentation, a plaintiff must establish 16 “(1) a misrepresentation (false representation, concealment, or nondisclosure); (2) knowledge of 17 falsity (scienter); (3) intent to defraud, i.e., to induce reliance; (4) justifiable reliance; and (5) 18 resulting damage.” *Robinson Helicopter Co., Inc. v. Dana Corp.*, 34 Cal. 4th 979, 999 (2004). 19 Negligent misrepresentation differs in that it “does not require scienter or intent to defraud.” 20 *Small v. Fritz Companies, Inc.*, 30 Cal. 4th 167, 173–74 (2003). Instead, the plaintiff must 21 establish that the defendant made the misrepresentation without “reasonable grounds for believing 22 it to be true.” *Id.* at 174. 23

Claims under consumer protection statutes and common law fraud claims are 24 “substantively distinct” such that, for a statutory claim, “a plaintiff need merely allege that 25 ‘members of the public are likely to be deceived,’ while “a common law fraud deception must be 26 actually false.” *In re Actimmune Mktg. Litig.*, No. C 08-02376 MHP, 2009 WL 3740648, at *7 27 (N.D. Cal. Nov. 6, 2009), *aff’d*, 464 F. App’x 651 (9th Cir. 2011); see also *Day v. AT & T Corp.*, 28 63 Cal. App. 4th 325, 332 (1998) (“[T]he concept encompassed in the phrase ‘likely to be 1 deceived’ has no relationship to the concept of common law fraud, which is also sometimes 2 referred to as deception.”). Thus, a “perfectly true statement couched in such a manner that is 3 likely to mislead or deceive the consumer, such as by failure to disclose other relevant 4 information” may be actionable under consumer protection statutes, but not common law fraud. 5 *Day*, 63 Cal. App. 4th at 333–34. 6 Defendant argues that Plaintiff’s intentional and negligent misrepresentation claims fail 7 for three reasons: (1) because there is no misrepresentation, (2) because Plaintiff fails to plead 8 knowledge of falsity, and (3) because Plaintiff fails to establish intent to defraud. (Doc. 20 at 28.) 9 Because the Court has already held that Plaintiff has sufficiently plead a misrepresentation under 10 the reasonable consumer standard, the Court now focuses on the other elements of intentional and 11 negligent misrepresentation. See *Freeman v. Time, Inc.*, 68 F.3d 285, 289 (9th Cir. 1995) 12 (explaining that common law fraud requires

showing that the label would mislead a reasonable 13 person); *Morn v. Am. Messaging Servs., LLC*, No. SACV 14-1635-DOC, 2014 WL 12660529, at 14 *2 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 18, 2014) (explaining that intentional misrepresentation requires the same 15 elements and standard as common law fraud); *Girard v. Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.*, 316 16 Fed App'x. 561, 562 (9th Cir. 2008) (holding that the representation element of a negligent 17 misrepresentation claim equates to the “reasonable consumer” standard). 18 The essence of Plaintiff’s intentional and negligent misrepresentation claims is the same 19 as that of his claims under California’s consumer protection laws—that Defendant made false and 20 misleading representations, by way of the dosage information not equating to the number of 21 capsules in the package. (Doc. 1, ¶¶ 102–19.) Defendant contends that Plaintiff did not allege 22 scienter, because Plaintiff made conclusory statements “that some unidentified person at Quten 23 possessed unspecified ‘actual knowledge of their falsity’ at some unidentified time based upon 24 unstated facts.” (Doc. 20 at 28.) But even under Federal Rules of Civil Procedure 9(b)’s 25 heightened pleading standard for fraud claims, “intent, knowledge, and other conditions of a 26 person’s mind may be alleged generally.” Fed. R. Civ. P. 9(b). Plaintiff’s complaint satisfies this 27 requirement. Plaintiff alleges that “Defendant is responsible for the making, labelling, 28 distribution, selling, and marketing” of the products, and accordingly, “Defendant possessed the 1 skills and expertise to know the type of information that would influence a consumer’s 2 purchasing decision.” See *Scott v. Saraya USA, Inc.*, 675 F. Supp. 3d 1040, 1048 (N.D. Cal. 3 2023) (holding that a pleading that the defendant was responsible for “development, labeling, 4 manufacturing, advertising, distribution, and sale of the products” was sufficient to plead the 5 scienter requirement). (Doc. 1, ¶¶ 10, 103, 110.) 6 Defendant additionally argues that Plaintiff made mere conclusory allegations without 7 specifying who “had an intent to defraud, when, or what that intent supposedly was.” (Doc. 20 at 8 28.) However, the complaint adequately alleges intent to defraud. Plaintiff plead that each 9 capsule “contains only a fraction of the advertised dosage” and that “Defendant knew that 10 consumers would pay more for a product if they believed they were receiving a higher dosage 11 than that of competitors’ lawfully labeled products.” See *DiGiacinto v. RB Health (US) LLC*, 668 12 F. Supp. 3d 950, 968 (N.D. Cal. 2023) (holding that a pleading that the defendant “intended to 13 induce consumers to purchase the product at a premium price” was sufficient to allege an intent to 14 defraud). (Doc. 1, ¶¶ 2–3, 112–13.) Therefore, Defendant’s motion to dismiss Plaintiff’s 15 intentional and negligent misrepresentation claims is DENIED. 16 F. Quasi-Contract/Unjust Enrichment Claim 17 Defendant argues that Plaintiff’s quasi-contract/unjust enrichment claim is subject to 18 dismissal, because Plaintiff did not establish that he lacks an adequate remedy at law. (Doc. 20 at 19 30–31.)³ The court “may construe an unjust enrichment claim ‘as a quasi-contract claim seeking 20 restitution.’” *Shin v. Campbell Soup Co.*, No. CV 17-1082-DMG, 2017 WL 3534991, at *8 (C.D. 21 Cal. Aug. 9, 2017) (quoting *Rutherford Holdings, LLC v. Plaza Del Rey*, 223 Cal. App. 4th 221, 22 231 (2014)). “This doctrine applies where plaintiffs, while having no enforceable contract, 23 nonetheless have conferred a benefit on defendant which defendant has

knowingly accepted 24 under circumstances that make it inequitable for the defendant to retain the benefit without paying 25 for its value.” *Id.* However, “[i]t is a basic doctrine of equity jurisprudence that courts of equity 26 should not act . . . when the moving party has an adequate remedy at law.” *Mort v. United States*, 27 3 Defendant additionally argues that this claim is subject to dismissal because the other claims based on the 28 reasonable consumer standard must be dismissed. (Docs. 20 at 31; 30 at 12.) This argument is foreclosed by the 1 86 F.3d 890, 892 (9th Cir. 1996). Plaintiff fails to make such a showing; the complaint does not 2 allege that Plaintiff lacks an adequate legal remedy. See *O’Shea v. Littleton*, 414 U.S. 488, 502 3 (1974) (holding that a complaint seeking equitable relief failed because it did not plead “the basic 4 requisites of the issuance of equitable relief” including “the inadequacy of remedies at law”); see 5 also *Sonner v. Premier Nutrition Corp.*, 971 F.3d 834, 844 (9th Cir. 2020) (holding that a plaintiff 6 must allege that they lack an adequate remedy at law to be subject to equitable restitution for 7 harm under consumer protection claims). Therefore, Defendant’s motion to dismiss Plaintiff’s 8 quasi-contract/unjust enrichment claim is GRANTED with leave to amend. 9

G. Standing to Pursue Injunctive Relief 10 Defendant argues that Plaintiff lacks standing to pursue injunctive relief because Plaintiff 11 “fails to plausibly allege any risk of future harm.” (Doc. 20 at 32–33.) Defendant contends that 12 Plaintiff “is now fully aware” that the dosage amount is not per capsule, and therefore can 13 “evaluate product claims and make appropriate purchasing decisions going forward,” such that 14 injunctive relief should be dismissed. (*Id.*) Article III of the U.S. Constitution authorizes the 15 judiciary to adjudicate only “cases” and “controversies.” The doctrine of standing is “an essential 16 and unchanging part of the case-or-controversy requirement of Article III.” *Lujan v. Defs. of 17 Wildlife*, 504 U.S. 555, 560 (1992). The three well-known “irreducible constitutional minim[a] of 18 standing” are injury-in-fact, causation, and redressability. *Id.* at 560–61. A plaintiff bears the 19 burden of demonstrating that the injury-in-fact is “concrete, particularized, and actual or 20 imminent; fairly traceable to the challenged action; and redressable by a favorable ruling.” 21 *Monsanto Co. v. Geertson Seed Farms*, 561 U.S. 139, 149 (2010). 22 A plaintiff must demonstrate constitutional standing separately for each form of relief 23 requested. See *Friends of the Earth, Inc. v. Laidlaw Envtl. Servs. (TOC) Inc.*, 528 U.S. 167, 185 24 (2000). “For injunctive relief, which is a prospective remedy, the threat of injury must be ‘actual 25 and imminent, not conjectural or hypothetical.’” *Davidson v. Kimberly-Clark Corp.*, 889 F.3d 26 956, 967 (9th Cir. 2018) (quoting *Summers v. Earth Island Inst.*, 555 U.S. 488, 493 (2009)). In 27 other words, the “threatened injury must be certainly impending to constitute injury in fact” and 28 “allegations of possible future injury are not sufficient.” *Clapper v. Amnesty Int’l USA*, 568 U.S. 1 398, 409 (2013). Past wrongs are insufficient by themselves to grant standing, but rather, are 2 “evidence bearing on whether there is a real and immediate threat of repeated injury.” *City of Los 3 Angeles v. Lyons*, 461 U.S. 95, 102 (1983). When standing is premised entirely on the threat of 4 repeated injury, the plaintiff must show “a sufficient likelihood that he will again be wronged in a 5 similar way.” *Id.* at 111. In determining whether an injury is similar,

the court “must be careful 6 not to employ too narrow or technical an approach. Rather, we must examine the questions 7 realistically: we must reject the temptation to parse too finely, and consider instead the context of 8 the inquiry.” *Armstrong v. Davis*, 275 F.3d 849, 867 (9th Cir. 2001), abrogated on other grounds 9 by *Johnson v. California*, 543 U.S. 499 (2005).

10 Before 2018, there was a district wide split as “to what extent a previously deceived
11 consumer who brings a false advertising claim can allege that her inability to rely on the 12
advertising in the future is an injury sufficient to grant her Article III standing to seek injunctive
13 relief.” *Davidson*, 889 F.3d at 967. In resolving this split, the Ninth Circuit held “that a 14
previously deceived consumer may have standing to seek an injunction against false advertising
15 or labeling, even though the consumer now knows or suspects that the advertising was false at
the 16 time of the original purchase, because the consumer may suffer an ‘actual and imminent,
not 17 conjectural or hypothetical’ threat of future harm.” *Id.* at 969 (quoting *Summers*, 555 U.S.
at 18 493). “Knowledge that the advertisement or label was false in the past does not equate to 19
knowledge that it will remain false in the future.” *Id.* For example, “the threat of future harm 20
may be the consumer’s plausible allegations that she will be unable to rely on the product’s 21
advertising or labeling in the future, and so will not purchase the product although she would like
22 to.” *Id.* at 970. On the other hand, “the threat of future harm may be the consumer’s plausible
23 allegations that she might purchase the product in the future, despite the fact it was once
marred 24 by false advertising or labeling, as she may reasonably, but incorrectly, assume the
product was 25 improved.” *Id.* Therefore, the Ninth Circuit noted that “we are ‘not persuaded that
injunctive is 26 never available for a consumer who learns after purchasing a product that the label
is false.’” *Id.* 27 (quoting *Duran v. Creek*, 2016 WL 1191685, at *7 (N.D. Cal. Mar. 28, 2016)
(emphasis in 28 original). 1 Plaintiff alleges that he “would like to, and would consider,
purchasing the Products again 2 when he can do so with the assurance that the Products’ labels are
truthful and consistent with the 3 Products’ actual ingredients.” (Doc. 1, ¶ 31.) Defendant contends
that this allegation is 4 “insufficient to establish any actual or imminent harm.” (Doc. 20 at 33.)
Defendant cites two 5 cases to argue that an allegation that plaintiff “may purchase” products in
the future do not 6 establish standing for injunctive relief. (*Id.*) However, those cases are
distinguishable from 7 Plaintiff’s allegations. In *Scheibe v. Livwell Products, LLC*, No. 23-cv-
216-MMA, 2023 WL 8 4414580, at *9 (S.D. Cal. July 7, 2023), the court held that the plaintiff’s
future harm was 9 “conjectural or hypothetical,” not “actual and imminent,” when the plaintiff
alleged that he “may 10 wish to rely on Defendant’s label representations and purchase the
Products in the future, but 11 cannot currently do so.” *Id.* Similarly, in *Tabler v. Panera LLC*, No.
19-cv-01646-LHK, 2019 12 WL 5579529, at *8 (N.D. Cal. Oct. 29, 2019), the plaintiff only
alleged that he “may purchase the 13 Products in the future.” *Id.* In both cases cited by the
Defendant, the plaintiffs alleged that they 14 “may” purchase the product in the future, but did not
indicate any desire to do so. However, as 15 the Ninth Circuit noted in *Davidson*, if the plaintiff
indicates a future desire to purchase the 16 products if the representations were true, such an

allegation is sufficient to establish an “actual 17 and imminent harm.” See Davidson, 889 F.3d at 970–71 (explaining that the plaintiff’s pleading 18 that she “desire[s] to purchase” defendant’s product but has “no way of determining whether the 19 representation . . . is in fact true” is sufficient to satisfy the “imminent or actual threat of future 20 harm” requirement). 21 Though the distinction is slight, the Court recognizes a plaintiff’s pleading that they 22 “may” purchase a product in the future does not concretely indicate a desire to actually do so. 23 However, by pleading that the Plaintiff “would like to” purchase Defendant’s product in the 24 future, the Plaintiff indicates a desire to do so, even when paired with qualifying language 25 regarding assurances of the product’s representations. (Doc. 1, ¶ 31.) Because the Court must 26 presume the truth of Plaintiff’s allegations and construe the allegations in his favor, Plaintiff has 27 plead actual and imminent future harm. See Daniels-Hall v. Nat’l Educ. Ass’n, 629 F.3d 992, 998 28 (9th Cir. 2010) (at the motion to dismiss stage of the proceedings, the court must “accept as true 1 | all well-pleaded allegations of material fact, and construe them in the light most favorable to the 2 | non-moving party”). Accordingly, Defendant’s motion to dismiss Plaintiff’s pursuit of injunctive 3 | relief is DENIED.

4 CONCLUSION

5 For the reasons set forth above: 6 1. Defendant’s request for judicial notice is GRANTED. 7 2. Defendant’s motion to dismiss Plaintiff’s first, second, third, sixth, and seventh claim 8 is DENIED. 9 3. Defendant’s motion to dismiss Plaintiffs fourth, fifth, and eighth claim is GRANTED 10 with leave to amend. 11 4. Defendant’s motion to dismiss Plaintiffs pursuit of injunctive relief on standing 12 grounds is DENIED. 13 4 IT IS SO ORDERED. 5 Dated: _ March 28, 2025 Charis [Tourn

TED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

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