

Healthcare debate could ease for holidays

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NEW YORK, Nov. 22 (UPI) -- Advocates on both sides in the healthcare debate are considering softening the tone of their ads and attacks as the holiday season approaches, experts say.

Proponents and opponents of reform may drop their more strident efforts as a way of keeping the attention of a public more in the mood for holiday cheer, The New York Times reported Sunday.

Both sides of the healthcare issue have spent a combined \$170 million on television ads, the most on any one issue in one calendar year, a group that tracks television advertising said. The two sides plan for much more but are faced with the problem of competing with the glut of holiday sales advertising, the Times said.

Advertising during the holiday season should make people feel good rather than bad, experts say.

"It will be interesting if we see combat ads over healthcare mixed in with Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," Evan Tracey of the Campaign Media Analysis Group said. "I would think very hard before I tied those two things together."