

# SIDE-FX

**The Drug Industry's  
influence on health care**

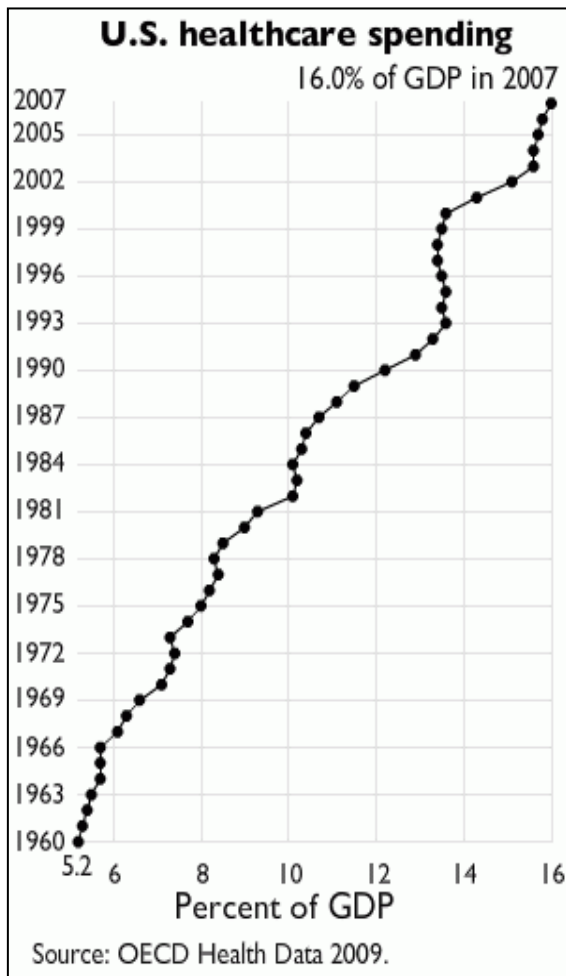
**By Keith Wassung**



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The United States has the most extensive health care system in the world. Americans pay more for health care than citizens of any other country. In 2010 the U.S. spent over two trillion dollars, an average of sixty-eight hundred dollars for every man, woman and child.



Yet the United States ranks as one of the least healthy nations in the developed world. Our infant mortality rate is worse than 20 other nations.

People live longer on average in 25 other countries. We are in the top five in incidents of cancer, heart disease, diabetes and autoimmune disorders.



**What has gone wrong? Why are U.S health care costs rising faster than any other country even as our overall health declines?**



It is important to note that the United States has the best emergency, crisis and trauma health care system in the world.

Medical doctors are very successful at repairing damage to the human body and at saving lives.

But these types of trauma cases represent a very small percentage of all health problems—less than one percent of all health issues are emergency in nature.

The majority of health problems are treated with drugs, which is a major cause of our health care crisis.



- There are currently 25,000 prescriptions and 200,000 over the counter drugs on the market.
- 4.4 billion prescriptions are written each year in the U.S.
- The average family has 29 different drugs in their medicine cabinet.
- 270 billion dollars are spent each year on prescription drugs



Drugs are foreign to the body. Drugs work by altering the body's natural biochemistry in order to suppress symptoms. Even with suppressed symptoms, the true cause of the problem may grow worse with the body's natural healing mechanism compromised by the drugs. In fact by interfering with normal cell function, drugs cause cellular malfunction which is the same as causing disease.



Unfortunately, when drugs cause disease, we have been trained not to call it disease. Instead we use the deceptive term "side effect". In 1984, the drug industry attempted to obtain a legal exemption from the liability laws that apply to virtually all manufacturers.

Why? Because even the people who make the drugs know they are not safe.

In addition to toxicity, drugs also cause severe nutritional deficiencies by depleting the body of essential nutrients. Antibiotics, anti-inflammatories and steroids all damage the human digestive system by impairing the ability of the body to digest food and absorb nutrients.

***"There is no healing force outside of the human body."***

Dr. Issac Jennings



Healing only occurs from within the body, never from the outside. Symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, fever; vomiting, diarrhea and pain are methods that the body uses to eliminate germs and other foreign materials.

When drugs are given for relief, the body's natural healing process is interrupted and this can cause even more health problems.

*Symptoms represent the body's best efforts to heal itself. By treating symptoms, you are suppressing the body's natural response and inhibiting the healing process. Instead of treating symptoms, doctors should stimulate the body's defenses to allow for completion of the healing process."*<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Stephen Cummings

iatrogenesis is a term that is used to describe a health condition that is physician or drug induced.

## JUST HOW SERIOUS IS THIS?



Adverse reactions to prescription drugs are a major cause of death in the U.S. An estimated 106,000 hospital patients die each year from adverse reactions, making adverse drug reactions the fourth most frequent cause of death. <sup>2</sup>

A study in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* stated that drug-related morbidity and mortality costs are 136 billion dollars a year—more than the cost of cardiovascular disease, the leading cause of death in the United States. <sup>3</sup>

According to the National Council on Patient Information and Education, over 50 percent of all prescriptions are used incorrectly.

Misuse or noncompliance is a major health problem in the United States, resulting in 218,000 deaths and the hospitalization of 1 million individuals annually. The total cost to the economy is approximately \$177 billion annually. <sup>4</sup>

A 1994 study in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* and the *Journal of the Federation of Experimental Biology* warned that antihistamines and anti-depressant drugs (including Prozac) contain chemicals known to accelerate tumor growth. While these drugs do not directly cause cancer, they can speed its growth. <sup>5</sup>

Not all adverse reactions to new drugs can be anticipated or avoided under the present system, according to medical experts. "It is simply not possible to identify all the adverse effects of drugs before they are marketed," according to a study in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. In fact, "Overall, 51% of approved drugs have serious side effects not detected prior to approval. <sup>6</sup>



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SPECIAL ARTICLE

PATIENT SAFETY

**Adverse Drug Events**

Tejal K. Gandhi, M.D., M.P.H., Saul N. Weingart, M.D., Ph.D., Joshua Borus, B.A., Andrew C. Seger, R.Ph., Josh Peterson, M.D., Elisabeth Burdick, M.S., Diane L. Seger, R.Ph., Kirstin Shu, B.A., Frank Federico, R.Ph., Lucian L. Leape, M.D., and David W. Bates, M.D.

N Engl J Med 2003; 348:1556-1564 | April 17, 2003

Abstract Article References Citing Articles (233) Letters

### Side effects from new drugs cannot be anticipated for 2 main reasons:

- (1) Individuals vary greatly in their reactions to chemical substances.
- (2) Drugs are tested where side effects may not appear in such a small group but may become painfully obvious when millions of people start taking the drug.



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Americans consume over 15 tons of aspirin a day, 34 billion aspirin tablets per year. NSAIDS, which include drugs like aspirin, ibuprofen and acetaminophen, are thought to be harmless drugs, but in an average year they will:

**Be responsible for over 200,000 cases of gastrointestinal bleeding and 20,000 deaths.<sup>7</sup>**

**Be the leading cause of kidney disease.<sup>8</sup>**

**Cause stomach ulcers, toxic headaches, and Reye's syndrome in children.<sup>9</sup>**



The elderly are especially likely to be medicated. Their average prescription rate is 13 per patient per year. Elderly Americans spend over three billion dollars a year on prescription medications. Adverse drug reactions especially trouble the elderly because they are more likely to have multiple underlying health problems and also tend to have a weakened liver and kidneys, which break down and eliminate medications.



Public Citizen Health Research Group reports the following prescription drug induced conditions per year for people over the age of 60.



- **A million adverse reactions to prescription drugs.**
- **243,000 hospitalized due to prescription drugs.**
- **163,000 mentally impaired due to prescribed drugs.**
- **2 million addicted to prescription drugs.<sup>10</sup>**



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# Why have drugs become such a big part of our society?



The drug industry has been able to heavily influence our health care system. 50,000 pharmacies and 700,000 outlets for drugs add up to a 235 billion dollar a year industry, which has the highest profitability margin of any business in the United States.

In 2010, drug companies had the greatest return on revenues of any industry, reporting a profit of 18.5 cents for every \$1 of sales, which was 8 times higher than the median for all Fortune 500 industries, easily surpassing the next most profitable industry, which was commercial banking with a 13.5% return on revenue.

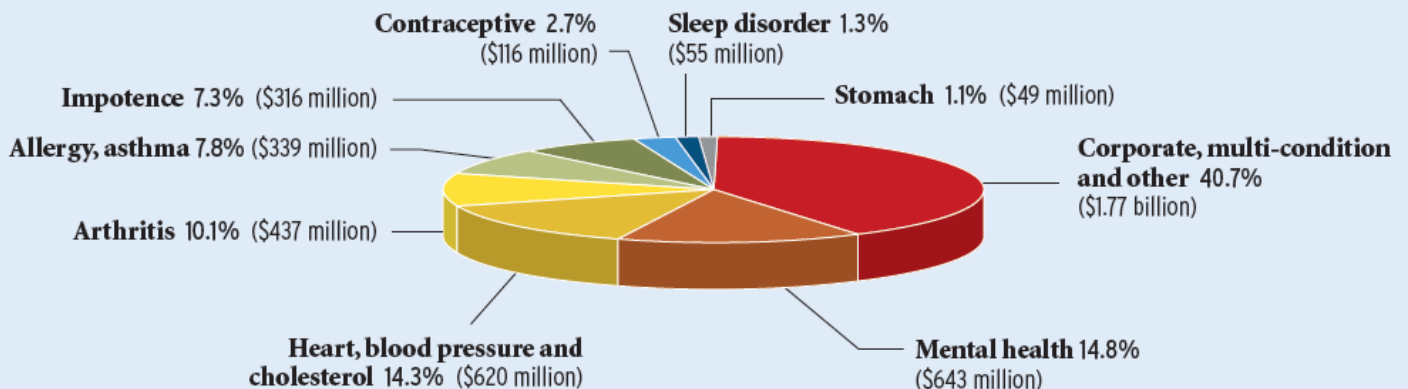
The top 10 drug companies are reported to have profits averaging about 30 percent of revenues -- a stunning margin.<sup>11</sup>

## IS THEIR BOTTOM LINE HEALTH OR PROFITS?

In 2010 Drug companies spent over 60 billion dollars (more than 165 million a day) to persuade consumers to buy their products. One third of all television commercials are advertisements for drugs. The average 18 year has been exposed to 20,000 hours of pharmaceutical advertising.

### PHARMACEUTICAL AD SPENDING BY CATEGORY IN 2010

U.S. measured-media ad spending of \$4.3 billion by condition.



Articles touting new wonder drugs are usually press kits sent out by drug companies. "Expert" physicians are normally paid company spokesmen.

Many newscast segments about prescription drugs are nothing more than canned promotions called "video news releases" put together by the drug companies for promotional purposes.

These segments rarely warn consumers that the drugs are potent agents that can cause severe, even life threatening reactions.



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Drug companies spend an average of \$10,000 per year on each and every medical doctor to persuade them to use their drugs. In addition to free samples, TIME magazine reported that:

-Wyeth-Ayerst Labs gives Medical Doctors 1000 points on American Airlines' frequent flyer programs for each patient they put on the hypertension drug Inderal LA

-Roche pays Medical Doctors \$1200 if they prescribe Roecephin for 20 patients. (Roche makes over \$11,000 on 20 patients treated for only 10 days)

-Ciba-Geigy offers free Caribbean vacations to Medical Doctors in return for their sitting in on a few lectures about Estraderm, an estrogen patch. <sup>12</sup>

Time Magazine



Drug companies also sponsor continuing education medical education courses which doctor must attend in order to keep their certification.

A recent Wake Forest study showed that medical doctors who attend these classes altered their prescription habits to the products sold by the sponsoring company.

### MIS-LEADING DRUG ADS

Medical researchers reported in the latest issue of *The Lancet* that nearly half of all drug advertisements published in medical journals cite studies or other evidence that does not support their promotional claims. As part of their research, co-author Dr. Salvador Peiro and colleagues with the Valencia School for Health Studies reviewed 102 promotional claims made in numerous medical journal advertisements. According to the study's findings, references in advertisements did not support promotional claims 44 percent of the time. <sup>14</sup>

“Only 6% of drug advertising material is supported by evidence”

BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL

“Believe me, folks, you’ll want to read this important new evidence on the effects of smoking. Then you’ll say... **MUCH MILDER?** **CHESTERFIELD IS BEST FOR ME!”**  
*Arthur Jaffrey*

**NOW...Scientific Evidence on Effects of Smoking!**

A MEDICAL SPECIALIST in making regular bi-monthly examinations of a group of people from various walks of life. 45 percent of this group have smoked Chesterfield for an average of over ten years.

After ten months, the medical specialist reports that he observed . . .

**no adverse effects on the nose, throat and sinuses of the group from smoking Chesterfield.**

**MUCH MILDER**  
**CHESTERFIELD**  
**IS BEST FOR YOU**

First and Only Premium Quality Cigarette in Both Regular and King-Size

CHESTERFIELD CIGARETTES  
 KING-SIZE CIGARETTES

CONTAINS TOBACCOS OF BETTER QUALITY AND HIGHER PRICE THAN ANY OTHER KING-SIZE CIGARETTE

APRIL 1993 13

Effective marketing has created a drug oriented society. But can we really blame a profit driven industry? Isn't health really our own responsibility? The good news is that you can achieve good health safely and naturally through:

## CHIROPRACTIC

Chiropractic is the world's largest natural health care system and is based on the following principles of science and human physiology:

Every function of the human body is under control of the central nervous system. Every organ, tissue and cell is controlled by billions and trillions of nerve impulses traveling from the central nervous system to the rest of the body.



The brain extends directly into the spinal cord, which is protected by the bones of the spine called vertebra. These nerves branch out to every part of the body.

When the spine is in its optimum position, the nerves are protected and optimum communication exists between the central nervous system and the rest of the body. This is when the body is at its highest state of function and healing.

Minor misalignments of the spine cause nerve interference, which reduces the communication ability of the central nervous system.

### **These minor misalignments are called “vertebral subluxations”.**

Vertebral subluxations interfere with the normal functioning of the CNS which reduces the body's inherent healing capability.

Doctors of Chiropractic detect and correct subluxations by physically adjusting the spine to restore normal spinal structure. This allows the body to function properly and to heal itself.

Doctors of Chiropractic are experts in spinal structure and body mechanics. Chiropractic adjustments are aimed at restoring and maintaining the structural integrity of the body by correcting spinal and postural distortions.



Chiropractors emphasize the importance of posture to overall health, a concept that has been often overlooked in traditional methods of health care.

***“The beginning of the disease process begins with postural distortions”***<sup>15</sup>

Dr. Hans Seyle, Nobel Laureate

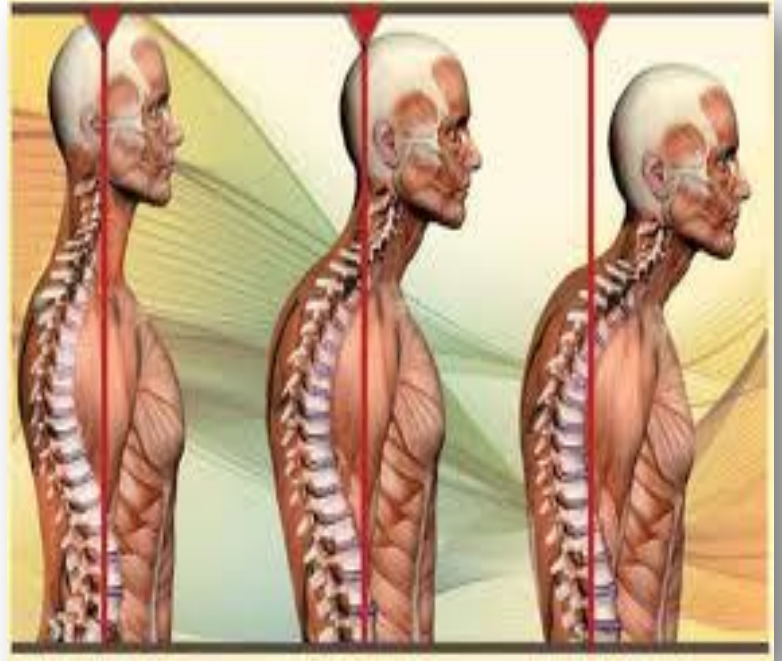


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# Posture and Health

- Posture and normal physiology are interrelated.
- Posture affects and moderates every physiological function from breathing to hormonal production.
- Abnormal posture is evident in patients with chronic and stress related illnesses.
- Homeostasis and nervous system function are ultimately connected with posture.
- Despite the considerable evidence that posture affects physiology and function, the significant influence of posture on health is not addressed by most physicians.<sup>16</sup>



**"Deviations in the body's center of gravity (read: poor posture)... have resulted in intestinal problems, hemorrhoid, varicose veins, osteoporosis, hip and foot deformities, POOR HEALTH, DECREASED QUALITY OF LIFE, and a SHORTENED LIFE SPAN"**

Journal of the American Medical Association

## CONCLUSION

Health care is slowly changing from a symptom and disease based system to a function and performance based system in which the structure of the human body is restored and maintained. Correction and maintenance of the structure of the spine is of paramount importance in the pursuit of optimal health.



Drug companies have repeatedly tried to discredit Chiropractic, and with good reason—they have no financial interest in a drug-less health care system that threatens their business.

Although scientific research has validated vertebral subluxation and Chiropractic, it has been overshadowed by a health care system that is intent on finding the solution to every illness in the form of some type of chemical or pill. Good health always comes from within the body and Chiropractic is an excellent means of achieving this.



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## COMPLIMENTS OF



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